■ ENTERTAINMENT/A3-1
Inside red carpet lifestyle of show biz celebs in new sub-section, Stars Living

■ BUSINESS/B1
4-month OFW remittances up 10.8% to $3.7B

■ METRO/A25
Wayward truck hits jeepney full of school kids; 3 dead, 12 hurt

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, June 16, 2006 ** 8 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 188 P18 website: www.inq7.net

GMA hecklers at PGH's donor rites held for sedition

By Gil C. Cabacungan and Margaux C. Ortiz

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WAS AGAIN heckled, this time by a group of college students and employees of the Philippine General Hospital (PGH).

Two college students and an electrician of the PGH were arrested when they staged a lightning rally after President Macapagal-Arroyo delivered a

SEE HECKLERS, A2

Ruffa, parents blame 'illiterate' maid for tax woes

By Armand N. Nocum

AN "ILLITERATE" HOUSEmaid was the defense taken by show biz couple Eddie and Anabelle Gutierrez and daughter Ruffa G. Gutierrez for their failure to respond to two letters of the Bureau of Internal Rev-

SEE PAGE A2

Gov't all out vs Joma; murder charges set

Shut up, pro-GMA allies slam Biazon

By Philip C. Tubeza, Christine O. Avendaño and Juliet Labog-Javellana

SHUT UP

Administration lawmakers yesterday powered on Sen. Rodolfo Biazon for revealing the initial findings of the Senate defense committee that conducted an inquiry last year into the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Biazon, chair of the committee, was accused of being publicity hungry.

In an exclusive interview with the Inquirer, Biazon said on Wednesday that there was massive fraud during the 2004 elections and that President Macapagal-Arroyo was the beneficiary of the cheating. Ms Arroyo has denied any wrongdoing.

Malacañang yesterday insisted that it was time to move on and leave behind the controversy that led to impeachment proceedings last year against Ms Arroyo. Her allies in Congress had squelched the move.

"The good senator is clearly reviving an issue that the public is tired of and wants to leave behind," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay said that Biazon's claim was only his "speculative assessment." He said Biazon had no conclusive evidence to back up his claims.

Lakas-CMD Representatives Ronaldo Zamora (Antipas) and Marcelino Libanan (Eastern Samar) chided the Senate for "practicing voodoo politics."

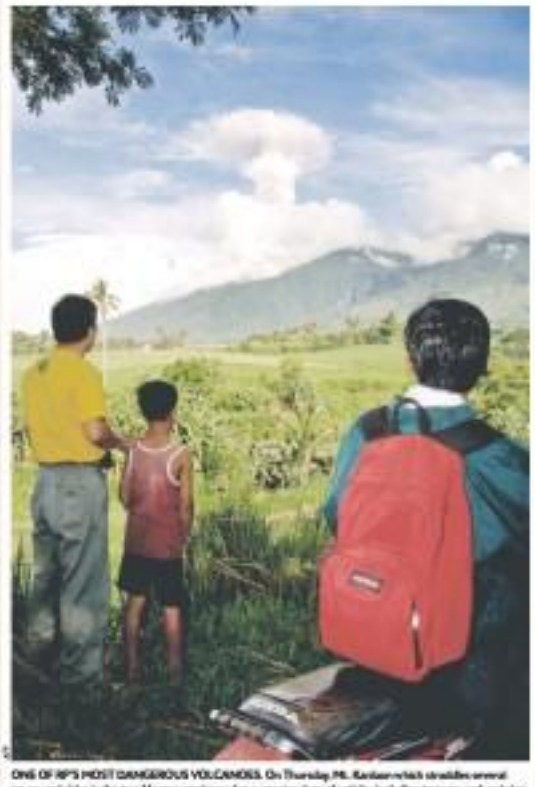
The opposition has charged that wiretapped conversations purportedly between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano allegedly showed that the President rigged the 2004 balloting.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles asked if Biazon had produced "any piece of legislation" as a result of his committee's inquiry into the scandal.

"These people are just after publicity. If Senator Biazon has nothing sensible to say, he should just shut up," Pichay said.

"Without the votes of the other committee members, what Bia-

SHUT UP! A23



ONE OF RP'S MOST DANGEROUS VOLCANOES. On Thursday, Mt. Kanlaon—which straddles several towns and cities in the two Negros provinces—shows greater signs of activity, including tremors and emission of columns of steam and ash. Residents have been advised to keep a safe distance from Kanlaon.

Raps based on two widows' affidavits

By Fe B. Zamora

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION IS TIGHTENING the noose on Jose Ma. Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), who is based in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Defense and security officials told the Inquirer that murder charges were being readied against Sison and that these would be filed in the Netherlands, setting into motion a legal battle that could put the communist leader behind bars.

The same sources said that the murder cases against Sison stemmed from the killings of Romulo Kintanar, former chief of the CPP-led New People's Army, on Jan. 23, 2003, and Arturo Tabara, a former member of the CPP Military Commission and Political Bureau, on Sept. 28, 2004.

The widows of the two ex-CPP and NPA leaders—Gloria A. Jayme-Kintanar and Veronica Tabara—declined to be interviewed by the Inquirer.

But both women, in their affidavits filed with the Department of Justice, accused Sison of the murders of their husbands.

The embassy of the Netherlands in Makati City also declined to comment on the supposed plan of the Philippine government to file a criminal case against Sison. The two countries do not have an extradition treaty.

In an affidavit filed with the Department of Justice, Gloria Jayme-Kintanar said the Jan. 23, 2003, killing of her husband was part of a "predetermined plan" by local communist groups "in compliance with a directive" from Sison who considered Kintanar a "threat" to the CPP and NPA.

Romulo Kintanar was shot by a lone gunman inside the Ramesmith Restaurant at the Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City. Kintanar's companion, businessman Raul Ma-

GOV'T A10

Raid on Erap 5 was anti-Red operation

By Luige A. del Puerto and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE ARREST IN MAY OF AN illegal-tanking commander official in Central Luzon led a few days later to the warrantless arrest of five men associated with ousted President Joseph Estrada, according to two military insiders.

It was actually an anticommunist raid, the military insiders said of the arrest of Virgilio Enriquito, chair of the pro-Estrada Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice (UMID), Jim Gabionales, Dennis Homa, PO3 Jose Gamoneg and Ruben Dionisio.

The arresting team did not know it was storming a house full of Estrada supporters, said the insiders who agreed to divulge the information on condition of anonymity.

Enriquito et al. were taken by armed men to plainclothes from Enriquito's home in Kamuning, Quezon City on May 22.

They were kept from their families for three days, during which time, they said, they were subjected to physical and mental torture.

Dionisio, 40, who appeared to have received the brunt of the torture, said he was being forced to admit he was a communist hit man sent to kill President Macapagal-Arroyo and certain Cabinet officials.

The insiders confirmed earlier statements of AFP officials that the real target of the raid was Dionisio, a barangay councilor suspected of being an important member of a Metro Manila-based Special Operations Group of the CPP's armed wing, the New People's Army.

The military had expressed the belief that Dionisio was using the alias "Mike Gamoro" and that he was also secretary general of the

RAID A10

Jolo's floral park a haven for war-weary folk

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

JOLO, SULU—IT USED TO BE that the only familiar things that shone in Parified town were guns fired in anger.

Today, there's water spouting out of fountains amid the sound of music in parks adorned with petunias and violets just across the Sulu capitol building.

Picnic huts jog and lovers dote in the area. Before, they could do that only at the wharf and airport of Jolo. But as the decades-old Moro insurgency appears to be winding down, there's a new liberating feeling in the air.

Pilarita Bonita, 50, a former elementary school teacher, hardly left her house in Barangay Asturias before, except for weekdays in school and occasional marketing and church obligations during weekends.

"I was afraid. I felt that my life was always in danger whenever I left the house," Bonita, a staff member of the Department of Education's Alternative Learning System (ALS).

That was before Bonita learned about the park.

Bonita said she had heard that

JOLO'S A23

Defense drift: 'Nicole' wanted more sex

By Volt Contreras and Turra V. Quimanda

THE US NAVY FACT-FINDING REPORT ON the rape case against four American Marines, a series of documents presented as evidence by lawyers for the Filipina complainant, is proving to be a double-edged sword.

Prima is, defense lawyers yesterday drew—and entered into trial records—excerpts portraying "Nicole," the complainant, as a woman who "wanted more" from her supposed abuser, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith.

Smith recounted the alleged rape that occurred at the Subic Bay Freeport on the night of Nov. 1, 2005, to a higher ranking officer, US Marine spokesperson Capt. Bartel Pattatt.

In turn, Pattatt relayed it to the US Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) to an interview five days later.

A portion attributed to Pattatt in the NCIS report said: "Smith then said the girl told him to finish the intercourse and that she wanted more. She initiated verbally and physically to the point of pulling him back down."

Defense lawyers read out and highlighted these statements during their cross-examination of Brian Corley, the eighth prosecution witness and third NCIS agent to take the stand.

But State Prosecutor Lagtimar Aguirre would later have Corley state that Pattatt was a "public affairs officer" of the US Marines.

The NCIS conducted interviews with the suspects and several witnesses. Four of its agents have been subpoenaed by Judge Benjamin Pozon of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 139.

Its report would serve as a basis for whatever charges the accused Marines—Lance

DEFENSE | A8

THE ACCUSED in court, from left: Lance Corporals Dominic Duplantis, Keith Silkwood and Daniel Smith. (Not shown is Staff Sgt. Chad Carpenter.)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Second FRONTPAGE

FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 2006

Power spot market to be launched

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO announced yesterday the start of the country's so-called "spot exchange for electricity" designed to spur competition among power suppliers and drive down the price of electricity for consumers.

The wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), which will start on June 23, will allow electric cooperatives and power distributors like Manila Electric Co. to choose from a wider array of energy suppliers.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the WESM would initially cover power distributors and suppliers in Luzon, specifically the Meralco franchise area, the country's biggest.

The WESM will make the market more transparent by allowing customers to "see what the current prices [are] which should lead to more economic decisions and more reasonable rates of electricity," Lotilla said.

He said Luzon has an excess capacity of 4,000 megawatts, based on a dependable capacity of 10,500 MW and peak demand of 6,500 MW. The excess there will be more reflect than buyers, this would lead to lower prices of electricity he said.

Lotilla said that with Meralco already in industrial customers with a minimum demand of one megawatt to choose their own suppliers, Meralco will be able to cut costs and this in turn would spur investor among foreign investors to locate their plants in the country.

The infrastructure and guidelines for the operation of the WESM have been set, and operational issues that delayed its implementation have been resolved, he said.

For example, Lotilla said a tripartite committee made up of the Energy Regulatory Commission, the Philippine Energy Market Corp. and the Department of Energy has been tasked to set a price cap to keep trading volatility in check.

Lotilla said the WESM would encourage more power suppliers to come in because they would be able to start selling even without contract.

Stop blaming opposition for blasts – solons

By Jaime Laboy-Javellana, GMA, Cabacungan Jr. and Lolipe R. del Puerto

SEN. RODOLFO BIAZON AND Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday urged police authorities to stop accusing the political opposition for the series of bombings in metropolitan Manila and go after the culprits.

"Prove it," said Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security, after National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and police officials blamed "destabilization forces" for three blasts in the capital the past few days that caused no injuries.

"I think Malacañang has a tendency to blame the political opposition for everything and anything that they cannot solve. I hope they can catch these people, whether from the opposition or not, and bring them to justice," Biazon said in a phone interview.

"I do not know of anyone in the political opposition who would do that. So they should prove it," Pimentel said.

Pimentel told authorities to go after the "real bombers" and warned them against stalling false accusations against the opposition.

Opposition not involved

"Bombings of places, including Camp Bagong Diwa, are not the work of the legitimate opposition," Pimentel said.

The Philippine National Police, the National Bureau of Investigation, the military and Gonzales should "already assess and prosecute the culprits according to law," Pimentel said.

He said the opposition "completely disassociates itself from the bombings and other violent activities and reasserts its adherence to peaceful, constitutional means of changing the leadership of the nation."

He said it was illogical for the opposition to conduct the bombings because they would only alienate them from the people and prompt the government to "step up its repressive policies against its critics."

Senseless play

Pimentel said that instead of engaging in their "counterproductive and senseless play" of accusing the opposition, law enforcers should get their act together to track down the real perpetrators of the bombings.

Gonzales yesterday backtracked on his previous statement.

"I never said that the political opposition was behind the bombings. When I said opposition, it's a general term for all those fighting against the government. I am calling them opposition but I'm not referring to the political personalities from the opposition," Gonzales told reporters.

Gonzales also disputed the opposition's counterclaim that the bomb attacks were actually the handiwork of the administration to be used to create a scenario of unrest to justify the declaration of martial law state of emergency.

"Who in his right mind will believe that? No rational thinking person will say that the government will harm itself," said Gonzales, who refused to comment on reports that he had recommended to the President the declaration of a state of national emergency.

Culprits identified

He claimed that the police had already identified the individuals who carried out the attacks. "But I don't want to give any clues at this time because it might affect the operation. We'll arrest [the] these people who are the center of the manhunt operation," Gonzales said.

Director Marcelo Ela Jr., head of the police capacity, said the names of three or five people had cropped up in the investigation but he declined to give details. He said police had yet to determine whether these people had a hand in the bomb attacks.

"We do know as of now," Ela said, but he said that the release of an arrest's sketch of a man who was reportedly seen near the scene of the explosion in Camp Bagong Diwa was an important lead. The camp in Taguig is the headquarters of the National Capital Region Police Office.

He reported little progress in investigating "Young Bayan at Kawal" or "Yakak," the little-known group that had claimed responsibility for the attacks.

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Japan urged to rethink aid in light of killings

By Blanche S. Rivera

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS have urged Japan, the Philippines' biggest lender, to review its development aid program in Manila as they called attention to the increasing number of environmental activists killed in the country.

Friends of the Earth (FoE) Japan, the US-based International Rivers Network (IRN), the Bantay Ozone NGO Center and the Yen Cho Community University of Taiwan also called on the Philippine government to stop the harassment of environmentalists opposing mining, logging and other forms of natural resources exploitation.

"We, from the international community of nongovernment organizations, are very concerned about the alarming rise of human rights violations and the spate of killings of political activists, media people and, lately, of environmental workers in the Philippines," IRN campaign director Aviva Imhof said in a press conference in Quezon City yesterday.

Militant environmentalist group Kalikasan claims that 15 people have been killed while two others have been abducted or assaulted under the Arroyo administration because of their environmental advocacy.

The death of some of the victims named by Kalikasan, however, were also classified by other groups as political killings.

Fob Japan campaigner Hiroto Ikitsu said the Japanese government was "aware of and very concerned" about the killings in the Philippines, especially after the death of Jose Isoon, whose local organization Tinimawa closely worked with Japanese NGOs to analyze the Inta Irrupt Multipurpose Dam Project.

"We are now raising the issue of human rights to the responsible Japanese government agencies and institutions as basis for reviewing their support and funding to identified mega dam, energy and mining projects," Ikitsu said.

The Philippines has received some 213.56 billion yen or about P93.8 billion from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation through Official Development Assistance for the Stabd Irrigation Project and Northern Negros Geothermal Power Plant Project.

Sequestration of Kokoy's Benguet shares upheld

THE SANDIGANBAYAN 6th Div. graft court has upheld the government's sequestration of the Benguet Corp. shares allegedly owned by Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, a younger brother of Imelda Marcos, the widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government's writ of sequestration issued on Oct. 27, 1986, against the disputed shares was "proper and valid," said the resolution issued on Wednesday by the Sandiganbayan's Fifth Division.

The court was persuaded that the PCGG had the documents proving that Kokoy Romualdez, the principal defendant in the sequestration case, was the "beneficial owner" of the Benguet Corp. shares.

The 4,737,159 Benguet Corp. shares were registered in the names of Palm Avenue Realty and Development Corp. and Palm Avenue Holdings Co., Inc.

The court rejected the firms' appeal against its Feb. 4, 2002, ruling denying their motion asking the court to nullify the sequestration order.

The two firms challenged the validity of the sequestration order, claiming they had not been included in the sequestration suit and that Eduardo Ilasa, who signed the sequestration order, was not allowed to be a commissioner of the PCGC at the time.

But the court said there was no doubt about Ilasa's authority to sign the writ as his designation as PCGC commissioner had the portfolio level of deputy minister in 1986.

It also said that there was no mandatory requirement in the law that corporations or business enterprises alleged to be repositories of ill-gotten wealth have to be included in a suit for forfeiture and recovery.

The decision penned by the division's chair, Associate Justice Ma. Cristina Cortez-Estrada, was concurred in by Associate Justices Roland Jurado and Teresita Villas-Bautista. Helen P. Flores

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
FRIDAY
JUNE 16, 2006

FVR calls on Europeans to invest more in RP

By Cynthia G. Balleza

TUMAUINI, PHILIPPINES – Fidel V. Ramos yesterday urged Slovakian businessmen to invest more in the Philippines as he would make a grand voting round Asia.

Speaking at a business conference organized by his Ramos Peace and Development Foundation (RPDEF) and the Slovak Republic in this Makati City, Ramos said Asia's economic vigor was redrawing the geography of global trade, with China emerging as a manufacturing giant and India as a hub of information technology.

Along with energy, he mentioned like the Philippines, he said, Asia is radically changing the relative prices of labor, capital, goods and assets throughout the world economy.

He said the Philippines, for example, offers many opportunities for the discerning investors, particularly in mining, energy, construction, chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

Business center

In recent times, he said, the Philippines has also become a center of business processes, or outsourcing mainly because of Filipinos' fluency in English.

Ramos said that while Americans and Japanese firms dominate Philippine outsourcing at present, he said the European would do well in future.

According to Ramos, European Union members shows have been the country's largest source of foreign direct investment, thus making the Philippines their base of operations would mean access to a market of more than 65 million Filipinos and some 550 million people in Southeast Asia through the Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA) mechanism and the Asean 10 plus China market of some 1.8 billion people.

He assured prospective investors their businesses in the Philippines would yield positive results considering the government's resolve to provide a good business climate.

"The Europe is where humanitarianism is being shaped...values we may expect reason and humanity to develop more rapidly than anywhere else," Ramos said.

As such, he said, he expects EU and Philippine relations to be more of a caring, sharing and dancing partnership for each other rather than a western increasingly developed and developing nations.

Synergy

Ramos also noted that a new world order was being born in Europe, "with states giving up portions of their national sovereignty in favor of a higher 'multilateral synergy'".

He said European countries no longer rested on the fulcrum of power but on the rejection of force and on "well-enforced rules of behavior."

"Gradually, painfully the whole of the global community is moving away from the preponderance of rule by sheer power toward consideration of interest," Ramos said.

"This is likely to be a slow evolutionary process, it will suffer intermittently the inherited setbacks but I have no doubt that it will be in Europe that we will first see the flowering of a full-blown community of consent, of rule-type that men and women of goodwill have bargained for since the beginning of mankind on our planet," he said.

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Asian economic future bright but young are restless

TOKYO—THE ASIAN ECONOMY will keep soaring ahead but faces growing risks as young and restless populations begins to seek a better quality of life and flash the wallet point, leading policymakers said yesterday.

Asia, which relies heavily on exports to Europe and the United States, must also overcome historical animosities to ensure the last recent growth within the region, said participants at the World Economic Forum for East Asia.

A massive and increasingly skilled labor force and huge consumer markets, particularly in China and India, promise a bright future for Asia, said many of the 500 officials, business leaders and academics at the five-day forum.

Growth engine

"I think the global growth will continue and the engine of that growth is Asia," said Roland Berger, the Indian commerce and industry minister.

"The 21st century is a century for Asia. Fundamentals of Asia are very strong," he said.

The forum, an expansion of the annual forum of world leaders in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos, is the first to be held in Japan, which along with other highly developed parts of Asia faces a graying population.

More youthful nations have reached a point where people can for the first time pushing to demand wealth first instead of wanting building, said Hussein Mat-tan, president of Malaysia's national oil company Petronas.

Personal freedom

"Younger generations are restless. They require greater personal freedom [though rules]. Asian economy was built on a more nationalist in process," he said, calling it a risk to growth.

Greater regional cooperation may alleviate the demographic crises in South Korea and Japan as they would be able to import young labor from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), Mexico said.

But Asian integration has proved elusive due largely to deep-seated historic animosities. Leaders of fast-growing China and South Korea refuse top-level talks with Japan due to disputes over Tokyo's past aggression.

"There has been some unfortunate history," said Yun Jong Yong, chief executive of South Korean powerhouse Samsung Electronics.

Unifying factors

"Cultural exchanges and education will create unified economy within the Asian community," he said.

Japanese Trade Minister Toshihiro Nikai echoed that optimism and said a more active flow of people, goods and culture would enhance regional unity.

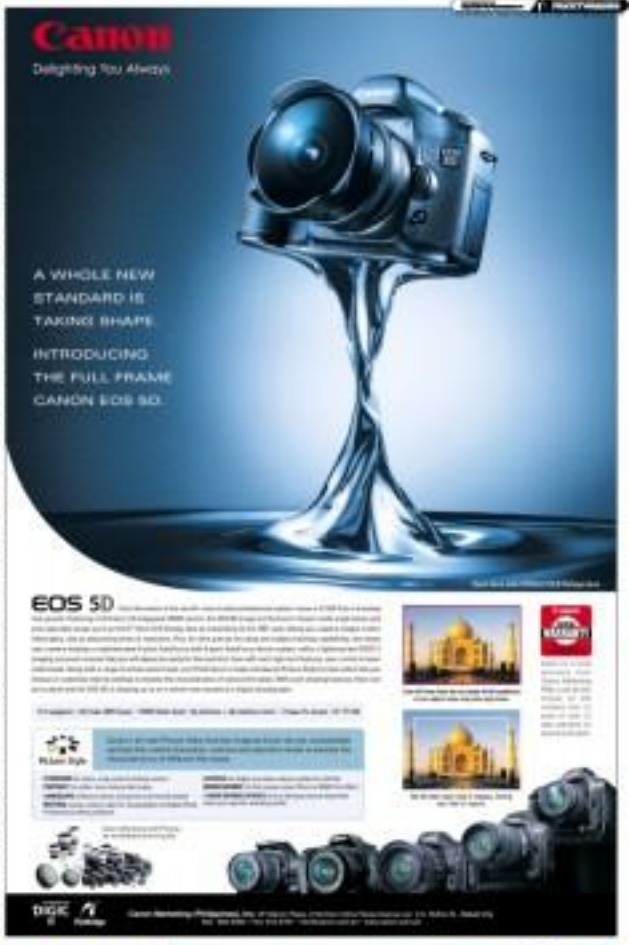
But Jiang Jianqing, chair of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, said that emerging economies which are fueling regional growth also needed to pay more attention to domestic demand.

"A problem ... is that the region relies too massive for growth. This can lead to a trend of trade protectionism," he said.

Uncertainties, challenges

"The global economy is filled with uncertainties. While we strongly believe in the continued growth of Asia, we must look at the challenges," Jiang said.

The Model Forecasts forum was set up in 2005 to bring together policymakers and experts in a casual setting. It has since branched out to hold regional meetings and been convened by the rival World Social Forum of anti-globalization activists. AFP



DOLE says wage hikes for everyone

A WAGE INCREASE MAY BE IMPLEMENTED even in regions where there are no pending petitions for a minimum wage hike, according to the Department of Labor and Employment.

Labor Undersecretary Romeo Laguitan said the regional tripartite wages and productivity boards there began reviewing wage levels and monitoring socioeconomic indicators to determine the level of increases in those regions.

"Even if the wage boards haven't started, among other factors, the need to balance the assistance given to minimum wage earners and the employers' capacity to pay.

Laguitan said the wage boards may set an date—not immediate on the issue, that is, they can issue wage orders months like the date of a petition.

He said that last year 30 of the regional wage boards issued orders to increase wages in this manner.

The regions where there are pending petitions are Metro Manila, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Ilocos, Pangasinan, Cagayan, Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao and Davao.

Labor groups have been agitating for an increase in the minimum wage because of the rising cost of living.

In response, the House of Representatives debated a bill mandating a P125 across-the-board increase in the minimum wage. The bill passed second reading, but did not pass third reading when Congress adjourned last week.

The Arroyo administration has opposed a legislated wage hike, saying it considers the general wage boards as the best way to determine the areas of wage hikes.

Workers' groups have deplored Malacañang's position, accusing President Macapagal-Arroyo of protecting the interests of big business, which have been opposing the P125 wage hike, at the expense of the working class. Julia B. Inducen Jr.

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  for construction of roads, school buildings, water and electric facilities in 1,000 conflict-affected barangays
- **P10 Billion Incentive Package Fund**
  for the optional retirement benefits of Government employees to streamline the government bureaucracy
- **P1 Billion E-Government Fund**
  for the computerization of government agencies that will increase transparency and decrease corruption
- **P4 Billion Infrastructure Fund**
  for roads, bridges, and water supply projects
- **P2.721 Billion Rehabilitation Fund**
  for the improvement of airports and navigational facilities

"The 2006 proposed budget is the biggest missed opportunity for poverty reduction in this decade..."

Rep. Joey S. Salcedo
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
House of Representatives

Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines

Slash in oil tariff won't affect customs take, says BOC

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE CUT IN OIL TARIFFS THAT RESULTED IN oil firms rolling back their diesel prices by 50 centavos is likely to help reduce customs collections, but the Bureau of Customs would still meet its target of nearly P200 billion for the year.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said the bureau's surplus collection, which had reached P4.3 billion the last time he checked, would make up for the shortfall resulting from cuts in the oil tariff.

"The [reduction in the tariff on] oil would not have an effect on our goal of meeting our target. I am very optimistic that the bureau will meet its target collection," he said in a phone interview.

Morales said that if the oil tariff were reduced to zero from the usual 3 percent from June to December, the Bureau of Customs would lose around P5 billion.

If the tariff were reduced to 1 percent throughout the period, the BIR would lose P3.7 billion. If a 3-percent tariff is imposed on oil, the bureau would lose P1.3 billion.

He classified the expected losses as a "small" amount.

Recently, the government reduced the tariff on fuel imports to 3 percent. An executive order issued in May by President Macapagal-Arroyo calls for the lowering of the tariff on oil from 3 percent to either 2 percent or 1 percent, or to its corrupting silhouette, depending on the prices of crude and diesel.

Because of the reduction, oil companies have agreed to roll back their diesel prices and to declare earlier this week a moratorium on a cooking gas price increase.

Morales also said that aside from the P4.3 billion surplus, he expected BOC districts to step up their performance so the bureau could continue meeting its monthly target.

Every month since January, the BOC has been posting surplus earnings over if some districts had not been meeting their collection targets.

Naia inspectors to don gloves

SOON? FEARFUL AT THE COUNTRY'S PRIMier international airport will soon be hand gloves for a more hygienic and professional way of carrying out their duties, the airport authority said yesterday.

"Hygiene, for both the frisker and the person being [frisked], as well as making them look more professional, are the reasons we will require our frisker to wear gloves," Alfonso Cusi, general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa), told reporters.

Cusi said the Miaa is currently providing hand gloves for some 200 friskers who conduct luggage and body inspections at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia). He added that Miaa Commodore Sandoval

"By next week, maybe they could start wearing [the] gloves," Cusi said.

Providing gloves to the friskers is among the steps the Miaa under Cusi is taking to improve the Naia's image.

For years, the Naia has had to make do with a congested and aging terminal buildings while waiting for the court cases surrounding the owners, leases and more modern Naia 3 to be resolved to pave the way for its opening.

Cusi said the Miaa intends to slowly phase out "human intervention," or the use of solid-fossil manpower, as a stop-gap security measure at the Naia.

Instead, Cusi said, the Miaa would focus on using latest equipment to provide tighter security at the Naia.

With a Note

Corrections

IN THE JUNE 13 ISSUE, a front-page story—"World Day to Child Labor: Frontline of working seniors get aid"—about the creation of children who attended the launch of the National Coalition against Child Labor in Connected Agriculture (NCACLCA) on June 12. About 900—not 200—children and 400 adults attended the launch.

* * *

IN THE JUNE 13 ISSUE, the caption of a front-page photo identified the place where Dumagat tribal folk and a school principal held a dialogue on education. The dialogue was held in the residence of Isko Gayo, Barangay Sta. Ines, Tanay. Read...not in Sta. Ines, Antipolo, Quezon.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a subhead on Page A8—"What Were Before"—that accompanied the continuation of a front-page story—"SC scrids Disdedalous Act on Mega Pacific by June 30"—contained an erroneous sentence in the seventh paragraph. The sentence should have read: "Storage fees for the [unidentified counting] machines and other materials amount to about P3.9 million a year"...not "Storage fees and other materials amount to about P3.9 million a year."

Ombudsman warns court order could spark crisis

By Nelssie F. Flores and Armand N. Nocum

OMBUDSMAN MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ yesterday said the Supreme Court's rejection of her appeal for the high court to reconsider its order directing the Ombudsman's Office to resolve the Mega-Pacific case by June 30 could put up against a constitutional crisis.

"If the high court's directive, what will prevent lower courts from directing us?" she said.

Gutierrez reiterated her arguments against the SC's May 3 order directing the Ombudsman to wrap up the investigation and file the necessary charges on the P1.3-billion Mega-Pacific computerization deal and submit a report by the end of June.

Last Wednesday the SC "denied with finality for utter lack of merit" the Ombudsman's motion for reconsideration.

In her motion, Gutierrez argued that in issuing the order, the high court had undermined the independence of the Ombudsman's Office as a constitutional body and denied it due process.

She said her office was holding daily hearings to arrive the identities, but stressed that it was doing so because it was their mandate and not because of the SC directive.

She also cited several SC decisions affirming the independence of the office.

For that, she got scolding from the high court, which issued a press statement on Wednesday warning that "it [would] not hesitate to exercise its power of contempt against anyone who fails to observe due respect for its directives, resolutions, orders and judgments."

The Office of the Ombudsman was created by the 1987 Constitution as an independent constitutional body. The Ombudsman and her deputies, referred to as "protectors of the people," are appointed by the President and are not subject to confirmation by Congress.

Supreme Court Spokesperson Ismael Khan yesterday conceded that the issue between the Ombudsman and the high court was "unprecedented."

But he stated that the SC had exercised its contempt powers in the past against officials of a constitutional body like the Commission on Elections.

He advised the Office of the Ombudsman not to trifle with the SC order, recalling how the high court has exercised its contempt powers in the past against government officials, judges, lawyers and other individuals for disobeying its orders.

"They will carry out their order. There's no question about that," said Khan, adding that the Ombudsman's Office could already be cited for contempt if it fails to heed the SC order by June 30.

In 2002, the SC fined Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and four other commissioners in amounts ranging from P5,000 to P20,000 when the poll body ignored orders on the Sen. Eugenio Bayron-UNO Labor Party re-Comelec case.

The decision was penned by the then dean Cano Austria and now Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban.

Khan said the penalty could go up to six months' imprisonment "in extreme cases when outside parties are concerned."

But he said the penalty could be lower for "co-equal, independent constitutional bodies" like the Ombudsman.

Pre-need firm releases P140M

PRE-NEED FIRM SCIPIC PLANS INC. (PFI) YESterday said it has started releasing P140 million in tuition payments for this school year on Monday to enrolling plan holders of traditional education plans in line with the Makati-regional trial court's recent approval of the firm's rehabilitation plan.

In a statement, PFI said the checks were delivered through couriers. First time enrolling plan holders get their payments at the Jaka Building along Ayala Avenue, Makati City, and at PFI branches for provincial placeholders.

PFI president Alfredo J. Yao said 12,000 enrolling plan holders will be receiving their checks via courier.

He added that all enrolling plan holders for school years 2006 to 2019 would be able to get back their original investments plus a return on investment (ROI) of anywhere from 1.01 percent to more than 2,000 percent.

Yao said there are 3,000 first time enrolling plan holders who will be receiving checks totaling P41 million.

In a separate development, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is considering the renewal of PFI's dealer's license, or its power to sell pre-need plans.

SEC Secretary Corazon Ligot-Telan said the SEC would first determine whether PFI is eligible to apply for the renewal of its dealer's license.

Sources earlier said a pre-need firm's eligibility to hold a dealer's license rests on a number of factors, including adequacy of capital, its ability to meet maturing and future obligations, and its ability to satisfy investor queries, cash.

"The commission will determine whether they are eligible to apply for a renewal of their dealer's license. Then it will consider renewing the license. But right now it has not yet decided on the issue," Telan said. Elizabeth L. Sanchez

OFF TO CANNES. The Philippine delegates to the 53rd Cannes International Advertising Festival 2006 are all set for the international competition as they pose for signage photo with Philippine Daily Inquirer SVP and CDO David Yobes (second from R) and AdBoard chair Manu Villanueva (center). The Philippines will be represented in the international Radio Lions jury by BBDO's chief creative officer David Guerrero and in the Young Creatives' Competition by Ms. Cecilia Barrogaza and John Paul Cuison of Leo Burnett.

PROTESTS still mount President Arroyo, this one by Nickson Astorga, a 3rd year UP medical student protesting tuition increases in state universities.

SHE CAME BEARING A GIFT. P150-million worth of new hospital equipment for the PGH with Trade Secretary Lotta Puja Ilusia (left) donated by a Spanish corporation. The distinguished visitors observe Dr. Joe Fajardo using the new equipment to treat a patient. PGH now has the country's largest cath center.

ONE OTHER PROTESTER is arrested shortly after Ms Arroyo's inauguration and turnover of the Sacred Ophthalmologica Jose Rizal at the Philippine General Hospital.

GMA hecklers at PGH's donor turnover rites held for sedition

From page A1

now building at the government hospital in Manila yesterday.

In April, Ms Arroyo was heckled by Teresa Pangilinan at the graduation rites of the Centro Escolar University where Pangilinan unfurled a banner calling for the President's ouster.

On her way to the wheelchair after visiting the Severo Ophthalmologica Jose Rizal on Thursday, Ms Acuzo was rudely interrupted with banners and loud music by a group of more than 40 protesters condemning her administration's neglect of the education sector and the steep cuts in the 2006 budget.

The protesters consisted mostly of students from UP Manila and included some students from Mapua and University of Santo Tomas and a few PGH employees.

Empress without clothes

Rory Riblet, University Student Council (USC) of Manila's chair, said his group was inspired by Pangilinan.

"So with the act of Teresa Pangilinan at the Cavite State University, this will repeat to the entire nation that indeed, the emperor is without clothes. Sir, earlier let her have our university without [us] having been at risk expose her a walk in the park, in the middle of the sufferings of the people," Riblet said.

The President was hurriedly whisked away by the Presidential Security Group to her vehicle, but the students continued their protest even after a number of PSG personnel and policemen confronted the banners and started arresting some of the protesters.

Just minutes before the incident, the President was all smiles when she welcomed the turnover to the government of the $8-million Severo Ophthalmologica, which was donated by the Agencia Española Cooperacion Internacional.

The facility, the largest eye center in the country, is meant to address the high rate of blindness in the country largely due to cataracts that affect close to 2 percent of the population.

Inciting to sedition

Police said they would file charges of inciting to sedition against three protesters—one employee of PGH and two UP students—yesterday.

Suspects Oyo Aguirre, 18, of Mangaldan, Pang. City; Ruth Sinquenia, 39, of Project 3, Quezon City; and Elmer Saroqijan, an electrician in the UPMEA were brought to the Manila Police District (MPD) headquarters for investigation.

The suspects, detained at the MPD as of press time, will be subjected to inquest proceedings, police said.

Supt. Rolando Miranda, Ermita Police Station chief, said the protesters, including the three suspects, chanted "Bastos ka talaga si GMA! (Crazy with GMA!)" while waving banners.

Agustin and Sinquenia, both members of the militant group Anakbayan, denied holding banners during the rally.

Manhandled

The two students said they were only doing community service.

"We just called for an increase in the UP budget," Agustin said. He claimed that the police manhandled him and the others.

Sinquenia said he joined the mass action to ask for a P3,000 across-the-board wage increase.

74% hike in tuition

In a prepared statement handed out by one of the protesters after the rally was dispersed, Agustin said: "The palace is the opportunity for the students to show right smack in the face of the President how much she has failed in governance and the delivery of social services to the people."

The students were protesting the 74-percent increase in tuition at the UP College of Medicine from P11,250.50 to P19,545.50 and the perennial budget cuts in the PGH budget that have forced poor patients to pay more.

Defense drift: 'Nicole' ...

From page A1

Corporals Smith, Dominic Duplanco and Keith Killawood and Staff Sgt. Chad Carpenter—many have never left Okinawa before.

Carley recalled interviewing Parmer on how it ate her Mandarin Hotel in Makati City.

Defense lawyers Jose Justiniano (for withdrawal) and Francisco Rodrigo (for Carpenter) had the agent attest to Parmer's interview as included in the VCIE report, mainly on what him it had purportedly told Parmer.

They also had Carley mention that Parmer also spoke of having received a text message from Philippine Star reporter Ding Cervantes saying that the latter had "information that there was no rape in Subic," and that the charge was "a mere ploy for the police to arrest."

Lawyers Benjamin Ventura (for Smith) and Estelito Mendoza (for Duplanco) skipped the cross-examination conducted by their co-counsel.

Procedural matters

Carley's direct examination, which was conducted by agents, mainly concerned procedural matters pertaining to the VCIE investigation.

He recalled that the accused were told of the military equivalent of the Miranda Rights prior to the interviews, that they signed papers waiving their right to counsel, and that the VCIE got authorization to search and seize their personal belongings on their ship, the USS Essex.

The defense ignored apparently any objection-provoking answers elicited when their clients were interviewed by the VCIE.

This prompted an animated exchange between the two panels on whether Philippine legal or US military procedures should apply in that instance.

'Napagdesisyunan ko'

At one point in the hearing, Senior Asst. Prosecutor Emilio B. de los Santos was stopped from pressing a clarification with his witness after the defense accused him of "interpreting her own witness."

The objection ignored any sin of omission after De los Santos asked Antonio Ramos, a Filipino-American special agent at the VCIE, if he thought his translation of "napagdesisyunan ko (I decided)" into "I was forced to" was accurate.

The line was part of Ramos' English translation of the statements of Vinoya's lawyers Jr. Villegas, driver of the Innova van where the accused allegedly conspired to rape Nicole.

Written in Filipino, the two statements contained Suntay's denial of his first statement where he was quoted as saying that he witnessed a "gang rape" on the night of Nov. 1, 2005.

De los Santos passed the question after Rodrigo called the court's attention to Suntay's statements as translated by Ramos, particularly a portion saying that the driver was forced to sign his first statement.

"Mr. Witness, drawing to you a paragraph subdivisionada, 'Sinulatan ako ng mga tao na, at hinatid ng kapatulong sersier, napagdesisyunan kong lumagda,'" De los Santos said, adding:

"Your translation of the same sentence read, 'Out of fear that I would be included in the case, coupled with my desire to go home, I was forced to sign.' Do you think 'napagdesisyunan' is the same as 'forced to?'"

'Impeaching own witness'

Rodrigo rose to object, saying: "Your honor, may we know if the prosecutor is impeaching her own witness? Because if so, we would gladly join in."

"No, I am not trying to impeach the witness," De los Santos said, adding that she was merely seeking Ramos' clarification.

Nailing on the objection, Judge Benjamin Pozon stopped De los Santos from pursuing the question: "He are Filipinos here... I think we know what's the difference between 'napagdesisyunan' and 'forced to.' Prosecutor De los Santos, please go to your next point."

The prosecution submitted and concluded its direct examination.

Being fluent in Filipino, Ramos had been assigned by the NCIS to translate the sworn statements of witnesses, including the second statement of Suntay.

Gang rape

Soriano had said that Dapsin Sanya, chief of the Intelligence and Investigations Office of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority's Law Enforcement Division, prepared the statement, and, over his objection, inserted a line to indicate that he had witnessed a gang rape inside the van.

During cross-examination, Rodrigo asked Ramos if he remembered translating Suntay's statement that read: "After I said I did not witness any rape, Ferrer punched me twice in the back. Tawes took the statement with his rape-written... I objected and I told him I didn't witness a gang rape. But [Tawes said that] if it was omitted, I would be included in the case."

Ramos, the last VCIE agent to take the stand for the prosecution, attested to the accuracy of the translation, but said when asked later that he did not personally witness the alleged rape.

He also corroborated the earlier testimony of Special Agent Cory Pegorar, who had attested to his report on his interrogation of Carpenter and Smith.

Ramos was present when Pegorgorge interviewed Carpenter and Smith on the USS Essex on the early morning on Nov. 3, 2005.

Carpenter had told Pegorgorge that he met Suntay with an "Asian female" at the Watertime Bar, a night spot inside the Free port where the accused and the complainant met.

He said the two later boarded the armed van where the alleged rape occurred.

EDDIE

ANNABELLE

KLYVA

Ruffa, parents blame 'illiterate' maid ...

From page A1

store asking them to explain a P1.2-million bouncing check.

The Gutierrezes denied they had intentionally refused to cooperate with the revenue officers sent to their house to examine the books of accounts of their company—Royal Eye International Inc.

Royal Eye is engaged in production, promotion and marketing of movies, television shows, recordings and live shows.

Speaking through lawyer Francisco Madeja, the Gutierrezes yesterday said that they did not show how they lived to the revenue officers because of the failure of Teresita D. Madeja, a housemaid and cook, to inform them of her receipt of the BIR letters.

"Being illiterate, Madeja did not know the importance of said letters and failed to inform respondents of their existence. Had she immediately notified respondents about them, they would have willingly coordinated and cooperated with the revenue officer," the Gutierrezes said in a six-page motion.

Barred entry

The Gutierrezes said the revenue officers, who were supposed to deliver the second request for examination of Royal Eye's accounts on March 27, 2006, were not allowed to enter their house by security personnel.

It was Madeja who received the BIR letter of authority dated March 17. The letter is sent to suspected tax evaders so they could explain their tax liabilities before the BIR files cases against them.

But in the complaint filed on April 7, the BIR said "the respondents refused to accept" the second letter of authority dated March 27.

'Fresh opportunity'

This time, the Gutierrezes said they would "be willing to present the records of Royal Eye if they would be given a fresh opportunity to do so. For they asked that the case be suspended in the BIR.

"Thus, in order to afford the respondents the chance to present the records and the corrections and the operational atmosphere of a preliminary investigation, respondents beseech this Office to suspend the instant case for administrative investigation so that respondents would be given the opportunity to present their books of accounts and other accounting records for examination," they said.

Reminding the case to the BIR, according to the respondents, would also erase doubts that they were deprived of due process and "secure them against hasty, malicious and oppressive prosecution" by the public.

In the tax-evasion case filed against Stella Gutierrez, a former Miss World runner-up now married to a Turkish millionaire, and her celebrity parents, the BIR said the three had failed to pay tax obligations for 2003 and 2004.

Under-declaration of income

The BIR said Royal Eye blatantly violated several provisions of the Tax Code by underdeclaring its income for 1998 and 2000 even when it received millions of pesos in cameria deals from Manila Seven for its...

Investigation by revenue officers showed that Royal Eye received from GMA Network P2.2 million in 2003 and P6 million in 2004, but then gathered by the tax bureau showed that it underdeclared its income by 40 percent in 2003 and 222 percent in 2004.

Notwithstanding the fact that the company was able to belatedly file its annual income tax return for 2003 and 2004, its attempt to forestall the BIR's investigation was rendered futile, as it still failed to declare its true and correct income for the said years," BIR National Investigation Division chief Aurel Umbalin said during the filing of the case.

Ramos backing Cha-cha through signature mode

By Norman Bordadora and TJ Burgonio

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FORMER PRESIDENT Fidel Ramos has made a commitment to help President Macapagal-Arroyo's Charter Change Advocacy Commission (ABCom) in pushing the shift to parliamentary government through a people's initiative.

In a statement released yesterday ABCom chair Lito Monico Lorenzana said Ramos made the pledge at a meeting on Wednesday with the commission members.

Ramos had earlier called on Mr Arroyo to cut her term short in order to make the shift easier. But he has since backed down on the call.

According to Lorenzana, a member of the Constitutional Commission that produced a draft charter last year, Ramos promised to help the ABCom "in its relentless way to push for wide-ranging reforms in the Constitution, particularly the shift from a bicameral-presidential system to a unicameral parliamentary system."

"President Ramos has agreed to become ABCom's constitutional mentor and assist in presenting the people's initiative to succeeded," he said.

Signature campaign

Signing up Ramos, a coalition chair a push to the people's initiative, is set to file a petition for amendments at the Commission on Elections. It claims to have gathered more than 6 million signatures.

Almost dead?

But in the opinion of opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, the Makabayang Isadad chad-trash move to amend the 1987 Constitution "seems to be almost dead in the water."

Osmeña told a press forum at the Senate that the Super 19 House-led people's initiative and the Arroyo administration-sponsored amendments are unlikely to amend the Charter had not gone passed because of inherent flaws.

"Mahirap talagang mag-usap through an incomprehensible problem in the 'pinoy' signature campaign], which is nothing all the signatures that they claim to have gathered," Osmeña said. Total essential by many of the signatories in Cebu."

2 problems

Osmeña also said the administration-dominated House was having a tough time mustering the three-fourths votes to convert the Charter in a constituent assembly.

"They have two problems there. No. 1, they can't even get the 3/4 votes. And No. 2, the Senate will not agree to voting jointly on any proposed amendments to the Constitution. They have unanimous stance on," he said.

The heads of the Senate and House committees on constitutional amendments must meet to thrash out the touchy issue of whether Congress should vote jointly or separately in amending the Charter—as no result.

The conflict stemmed from a constitutional provision stating that any amendment to or revision of the Charter may be proposed by Congress upon "a vote of three-fourths of all its members."

Osmeña likewise said he did not see the Senate refusing or in any manner against the House position to go it alone on Charter change, even under a Sunday presidency under Sen. Manuel Villar.

Based on a term sharing agreement, Villar, an administration ally-senator, is to take over the chamber's top post from Sen. Franklin Drilon when Congress opens its third regular session on July 24.

"It's a personal issue, yes. Senator Villar would be on Senate speaking terms with Malacañang than Senator Drilon. That's an openly admitted fact," Osmeña said.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, June 16, 2006
Bible Words for Ordinary Time
Lectionary: 126
Gospel: Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus said to his disciples, "You have heard that it was said: Do not commit adultery. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has in his heart already committed adultery within it in heart.

"So, if your right eye causes you to sin, pull it out and throw it away. It is much better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away! It is better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell.

"It was also said: anyone who divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce. But what I tell you is this: If a man divorces his wife except for the case of unfaithfulness, he causes her to commit adultery. And the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Commentary

Allah leads for God is the usual places: the wind, the fire, the earthquake, the places of power, but God is not there. God comes in a whisper of wind but Elijah has difficulty hearing/receiving God that way, because he has decided He killed the prophets of Baal, and God did not kill him to decide. He forgot is here to prophet to Israel. As must look for another to continue God's decision to do what he was not commanded.

And Jesus gives commands to us. They are old new vocabulary that now they are revealed in full meaning and we are moved to live them in depth and intensity. He are to be serious about holiness and obedience, not lethargy.

Gov't all out vs Joma; murder charges set

From page A1

tolerant, was wounded in the attack.

In a separate affidavit filed with the justice department, Veronica Tabara said she was "correct" that Sison and other communist leaders were "responsible" for killing her husband, whose policy differences with them resulted in a serious split within the CPP and NPA in the early 1990s.

Atty. Tabara said his son-in-law, Reydeen Ong, were killed in the parking lot of SM Fairview in Quezon City on Sept. 26, 2004.

In statements issued following the two killings, the CPP and NPA said Kintanar and Tabara were turned out the death penalty for their "criminal and counterrevolutionary activities."

Personal knowledge

In their separate affidavits, the two widows admitted having "personal knowledge of the crimes and policies" of the CPP and NPA.

According to both women, Sison was the chair of the CPP Central Committee and the person behind the alias "Armando Liwanag" and "Armando Liwanag."In previous media statements, Sison had denied using the aliases "Armando Liwanag" or "Armando Liwanag."

"I have personal knowledge in the (archival) operations of the CPP/NPA through its Special Operation Group and, their modes of operation to eliminate/neutralize the misdeeds of the governmental officials and private individuals, including the killing of my husband who was wrongly, maliciously and unjustly judged as a counterrevolutionary," Aquino-Kintanar said in her affidavit.

She named Benito Tiamzon and his wife Wilma, both alleged members of the Political Bureau and the Executive Committee of the CPP Central Committee; Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, CPP spokesperson, and several John Does as among those who "conspired" to murder the former NPA chief.

"My husband was one of those who questioned the assumption of Sison as the chairman of the CPP Central Committee and the person behind the alias 'Armando Liwanag'" and 'Armando Liwanag,'" in previous media statements, Tabara had denied using the aliases "Armando Liwanag" or "Armando Liwanag."

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"My husband was one of those who questioned the assumption

Veronica Tabara said Sison's anger toward her husband was rooted in an "internal debate" on strategy and tactics within the CPP in 1992.

According to Veronica, the debates led to a split between the pro-Sison group called the "reaffirmist" and the anti-Sison group, the "rejectionist faction," which included her husband, Kintanar and Fidencio Lagman, who was killed in early 2001.

Tabara was one of the leading organizers of the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa sa Pilipinas, which later coalesced with the the Revolutionary Proletarian Army and the Mindanao Peoples Liberation Brigade. The RPM-ABB-RPMP group claims to be a more orthodox Marxist-Leninist party in order parts of the country as well.

"The split of the rejectionists group inspired Joma (Sison) and other leaders who remained with the CPP/NPA/NDF and even influenced the communist to renounce armed struggle," Veronica Tabara said.

The plan to file murder cases in the Netherlands against Sison seem to indicate that the Arroyo administration is tightening the noose on the communist leader.

Peace talks off

In July last year, the NDF announced it was suspending peace talks with what it described as the "counterrevolutionary regime of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The umbrella group of all communist organizations in the Philippines said it would wait for the next administration before resuming peace negotiations.

The talks had been stalled for a year after communist negotiators insisted that the Arroyo administration use its influence with the United States and the European Union to get the CPP and NPA removed from the US and EU lists of international terrorist organizations.

Despite the breakdown of peace negotiations, the NDF on June 4 promised the Arroyo administration to resume talks on 40 "unresolved human rights violations" by both sides.

The NDF's call for discussions on the cases coincided with a resurgence of killings of political activists around the country, which have been blamed on the Arroyo administration. An incursion rally drawn at least 250 militants and activists had been killed around the country since Ms Arroyo assumed office in 2001.

Six days ago, human rights group Karapatan said 36 political and political-related activists and journalists had been killed in an alleged bid to oust her in February. Today have filed with Department of Justice prosecutors a complaint of rebellion and insurrection against about 50 leftist leaders, including Sison.

Communist thugs

Talking tough before graduates of the Philippine Military Academy in March, Ms Arroyo described "communist terrorists" behind by an communist guerilla ideology devoid of the violent that you live by and die for every day" as one of the two main security threats to the country.

She named "terrorist organizations that have perverted religion" as the other main threat. With a report from PIA Research

Raid on Erap 5 was anti-Red operation

From page A1

CPP committees in Metro Manila and Rizal.

The arresting team turned out to have been composed of agents of the intelligence service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Military Intelligence Group (MIG)-15 and units belonging to the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

AFP officials yesterday said 1Lt. Cpl. Danny Bolintaan had been ordered as spokesman of MIG-15, the military's counterintelligence unit in Metro Manila, pending the military's investigation of the alleged torture of the Estrada supporters.

It was the lately cited, Commodore Leonardo Calderon, who ordered Bolintaan's relief, according to the officials who spoke on condition that they not be named.

To counter allegations that Bolintaan was relieved to pave the way for the prosecution of Calderon," one official said.

Bolintaan will reportedly step down on June 17. The reasons reported to name his replacement, invoking the confidential nature of both assignments.

AFP spokesperson neither confirmed nor denied Calderon's relief.

Robinson was apparently one of the two MIG-15 officers who, during their ex-officio time, were ordered to undergo pretrial investigation preparatory to court-martial for "inflicting injury" on Dionisio and company.

The AFP had refused in shortly to the eight MIG-15 personnel, saying it wanted to protect its operatives from retaliation by members of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

No politics

The military insists said politics had nothing to do with the raid on Estrada's house.

It was "a job against the communist movement" and was "not meant to harass the Estrada group," said one of the sources.

"The (MILG) is just a small group, you know," he said, indicating that if the military had wanted to harass Estrada supporters, it would have gone after more prominent people or groups allied with the deposed President.

De Guzman

On May 15, the military arrested Debby de Guzman at his house in Montalban, Rizal, the incident said.

De Guzman is purportedly a top CPP official in Central Luzon. He was said to have continued to be involved in the killing of former communist rebels Rodolfo Kintanar and Bernabe Tabara. (Story on Page A1.)

He has supposedly submitted an affidavit saying that his cell was on a mission at left ranking officials of the Arroyo administration and that part of the GMA's 3-point program was to "liquidate" the CPP.

Shortly after De Guzman's arrest, a military informer confirmed his movements, the incident said.

Both De Guzman and the informer separately mentioned Mike Canseco, a purported key member of the team that killed Kintanar and Tabara.

"What (rank) said complimented (the other's statement)," the incident said.

Tracking 'Gonzaro'

This was how the incident related the turn of events:

The lady tracked "Gonzaro" to his supposed house in Quezon City but failed to find him.

The informer, who was still in contact with Gonzaro, set up a meeting with the latter by mobile phone.

"They were supposed to meet in Batasan-6, but Bicutan-Cabo Gumaya) sent a text message saying they should meet at Onin festival. It was their code for [for Bicutan] Examining, Quezon City," the source said.

As soon as the MIG-15 operatives confirmed that Dionisio was inside the house, they moved in.

The informer, who was present when Dionisio et al. were hauled away in an unmarked military vehicle, identified each one except PO3 Gonzaro.

"He could not place him (Gonzaro), but as the others were being brought out, he would say each person's name and add that he was a member of the collective," said one of the insiders.

The source also confirmed the report that Angel cited Calderon was not immediately told of the arrests.

Calderon was supposedly at a meeting outside Metro Manila at the time.

Baking bread

One of the insiders said military agents were confident about arresting rebels even without warrants because of the principle of a continuing crime.

Under the rules of court, a warrant is not needed to arrest a person committing a continuing crime, such as rebellion.

Asked how sure the lady was of the information that Dionisio was Gonzaro, or that De Guzman and the military informer were supplying correct information, the insider said: "It's like asking a baker if he knows how to bake bread.

"It's their (the military agents') job to go after terrorists."

The AFP initially denied having Dionisio and company in custody and, subsequently, only after 36 hours later.

On May 25, the Department of Justice ordered the release of the five men for "insufficient evidence."

Pretrial probe

On May 26, apparently smarting from the public backlash, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga ordered the Judge Advocate General's Office to conduct a pretrial investigation.

At that time, AFP public information office chief Col. Tristan Kison said it was possible that MIG-15 head Brig. Gen. Ernesto Gonzaga and other officers were among those to be investigated, but added that the latter did not take part in the torture.

Kison also said no one among the eight MIG-15 operatives was relieved. But later, he confirmed that they were restricted to quarters at the Intelligence Service Group in Camp Aguinaldo, pending the results of the investigation.

Shortly three weeks after Senga issued his order, the pretrial investigation has yet to start.

Filipinizers

Dionisio et al. would later say that they suffered physical and mental torture in the hands of their abductors.

A physician who later examined and treated Dionisio said three of his wounds looked like cigarette burns. Another said Dionisio had told him that he was beaten up in the head but allegedly said that this beautiful rebellion can't they (the) cannot continue. Their hands are tied," Dolino said.

Capulong pointed out that the high tribunal specifically "ordered, commanded and directed" the DOJ to terminate the sworn quo effective June 5 "until further orders from the high court.

Dolino said he hoped the high court would eventually rule in favor of his client and nullify the DOJ preliminary investigation.

The petition, filed by Ladlad and others, accused the prosecutors of acting "with manifest bad faith, without or in excess of jurisdiction and with grave abuse of discretion during the preliminary investigation."

Ladlad, an offshoot of the Bayan Muna party-list group, said he doubted that the Supreme Court order would stop their alleged "political persecution" by the authorities. Philip C. Tubeza with a report from Norman Bordadora

Beltran to invoke SC ruling in bid for freedom

THE'S LIST RED CHOPPY BELTRAN will use a Supreme Court order stopping the government from prosecuting a rebellion case against his accused to ask a lower court for his freedom.

Lawyer Romeo Capulong said he will be filing the motion today or on Monday at the Makati court of Judge Jaime Salazar Mojica.

"We will invoke the status quo order and the principle of equal protection under the law since he (Beltran) is similarly situated as with the other accused," Capulong said.

"The so-called evidence against them is identical and to there is no more reason to keep (Beltran) in jail. He was illegally arrested and was subjected to an invalid inquest proceeding," Capulong said.

Status quo order

The Supreme Court issued a status quo order on June 5, effectively stopping the Department of Justice from prosecuting the case against Beltran, the Batasan 5 and 48 others.

SC spokesperson Ismael Khan said the lower court should also stop its proceedings "in compliance with the status quo order."

Lawyer Jose Manuel Diokno, the counsel of Vicente Ladlad, one of Beltran's co-accused, dismissed the DOJ claim that the order had been complied with and said that the prosecutors had already finished their preliminary investigation and the case had already been filed in court.

"That's crazy. They will be enacting nonsense if they continue. The biggest event in the land has already said that this beautiful rebellion case they filed cannot continue. Their hands are tied," Diokno said.

Capulong pointed out that the high tribunal specifically "ordered, commanded and directed" the DOJ to terminate the sworn quo effective June 5 "until further orders from the high court.

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Jamby, Satur to take RP 'rights violations' to UN

By TJ Burgonio

HAILED BY THE positive response of a UK official, Sen. Jamby Madrigal is bringing evidence of the country's "worsening human rights situation" to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Switzerland.

Madrigal and Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo will leave next week for Geneva in time for the 4th (GOP) 12th session of the Human Rights Council where its country's human rights record will be reviewed.

The opposition lawmaker said she had spoken with an official of the body's Special Rapporteur on Freedom Expression on the matter and had been asked to submit evidence to back it up.

"Representative Ocampo and I will visit the UNHCHR in Geneva for this purpose. We shall bring to the attention of the UNHCHR the gravity of the situation here," Madrigal said in a statement.

Madrigal said she was seeking UN intervention and assurance to its instruments, particularly the Special Procedure, "to hold the Philippine government accountable for its human rights violations."

Similar to stance in the Philippines, we have no expectation but to resort to that Special Procedure in the United Nations to prevent impunity and to stop the series of desecration of life in the Philippines," she said.

This procedure, she added, "is the last resort of hope in a country plunged in a deep political crisis where the rule of law hangs by a thread."

If they succeed, the senator said, they would ask the UNHCHR to send a Special Rapporteur to Manila on condition to investigation.

"We shall also ask that the Philippines be removed from the Human Rights Council since its government has lost the moral ascendancy to protect the rights of the people," she said.

"It became the senator's words last Independence Day, the day of 'orchestrated' has arrived to hold the Philippine government liable for their actions."

The senator on March 2 wrote Ambassador Ogalbo, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, to take action on the arrest and detention of critics, the dispersal of rallies and the harassment of the media by the Arroyo administration.

"The Philippines is already in a state of undeclared martial law where the rule of law no longer exists and the fundamental freedoms enjoyed by the people are fast disappearing through the blatant and false name disregard by the Arroyo administration," she said in her letter.

The senator, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, some congressmen, three Catholic bishops and several others were arrested with water cannons by the police while holding a prayer procession in Manila on Jan. 14 last year.

Ocampo wrote the bench on March 14 to say he was reminding the material save by the senator "with a view of possible action, as appropriate, in the framework of its mandate."

PCGG has new commish

MALACAÑANG PALACE Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) Director Ignacio Bunye has been appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to replace Williams Dickson.

Bunye's appointment was announced during Cbg meeting this at the PCOO office room 5. His appointment will not be evaluated until yesterday, however.

Bunye, an Ateneo Law School graduate, retired from the PCOO on April 9 as director for assets and management when he reached the mandatory retirement age of 65. He joined the PCGG in 1987 during the term of chair Sunnie Diaz. He will handle the legal affairs office.

Bunye's appointment completes the roster of PCOO commissioners with Camilo Sabio as chair. Aside from Bunye, the other commissioners are Undersecretaries Marcelo Ramos and Cigaboyloan, porter Ramon Ilarde and former Nicanor Conti.

Alvin Pepe

OIL FIRMS' OLYMPICS

Petroleum players run their crisis preparedness skills in the Emergency Response Olympics (ERO) 2006. Organized by Total (Philippines) Corp., the olympics is an annual competition touting the firefighting and first aid skills of local oil firms' employees. This year's ERO was held in Mariveles, Bataan, with Petron Corporation, Pilipinas Shell and PTT participating. Overall champion was Total's Bataan Terminal.

In RP, expensive medicines must come with a prayer

STRIKE SURVIVOR JOMOND LOZIO II is supposed to take four tablets of two medicines each day, including the anti-hypertension drug Norvasc. But to save money, the 58-year-old mechanic only uses a day supplementing the dose each time with a frozen prayer.

Living is luckier than most Filipinos. According to government statistics, 70 percent of the 83 million Filipinos have to make do without to lifesaving drugs.

Next to affluent Japan, the cash-strapped Philippines has Asia's second most costly medicines, with some drugs priced 5 to 15 times higher than the same medicines sold in India or Pakistan, the data shows.

Fed up with the situation, officials, consumer groups, health workers and fair trade advocates have teamed up to filibuster Medicine at Affordable Prices, a coalition targeting multinational pharmaceutical companies with the aim of curbing the staggering cost of medicines in the country. The group is supporting legislation that would make importing cheaper drugs possible and encourage the production of generic drugs.

The campaign's launch came as the Philippine government is battling the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer over plans to import cheaper Norvasc from Pakistan.

'Patent infringement'

In March, Pfizer sued two government agencies – the Philippine International Trading Corp. and the Bureau of Food and Drugs Administration – for alleged patent infringement.

It asked a suburban Manila court to order BAND to revoke an approved import registration for the antihypertension medicine entered by Pfizer's patent. The 17-year patent expires in June 2007.

PITC head Roberto Pagdanganan said his office last year submitted to BAND its sample bottles from Pakistan so that the government could be ready to import the cheaper medicine once Pfizer's patent expires.

A 5 mg tablet of Norvasc sells for $0.16 cents in the Philippines, nearly five times more than in Pakistan, where it costs 1.9 US cents, Pagdanganan said. Another Pfizer brand, the painkiller Panstan, is priced 14 times higher in the Philippines than in Pakistan.

Consumers, officials angry

Pfizer's case has angered officials and consumers in the Philippines, where a third of the population lives in poverty and where hypertension is a major killer.

Government data show multinational drug companies hold 70 percent of an estimated $1.9 billion Philippine pharmaceutical market.

Rep. Felipino Revist, in a speech in the House of Representatives, recently called for a boycott of all Pfizer products. He accused the company of "persecuting millions of Filipinos who simply could not afford to buy the said medicine and are left with no choice but just to die."

Pfizer said its actions upheld the importance of encouraging innovation by protecting the intellectual property of companies that discover and develop lifesaving drugs.

"This is simply a matter of preserving our patents for amlodipine besylate (Norvasc) through its expiration date of June 2007," Pfizer responded in a statement. "We are seeking legal assurance that there will be no importations of an unauthorized amlodipine besylate product for the duration of this patent term."

Pagdanganan added the Pfizer suit "is harassment case," and filed a countersuit.

"It's greed and arrogance," he said.

He said it takes more than a year to get BAND's import approval and, by suing, Pfizer was effectively extending its patent. Every year's delay in the entry of the drug from Pakistan translates to $21 million in Pfizer sales of Norvasc, he said.

Pagdanganan said PITC had not sold a single amlodipine besylate product in the Philippines and has promised not to do so until Pfizer's patent expires. The only issue, he said, is whether importing samples of patented drugs for registration purposes constitutes patent rights infringement.

Loophole

The practice is allowed under the "Bolar Provision" of the World Trade Organization's trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, known as TRIPS. But the provision is not spelled out in the Philippines' Intellectual Property Code.

TRIPS also allows countries to do "parallel importation" of a medicine, sold at a cheaper price in another country, even without the approval of the patent holder.

Philippine officials blamed the country's high drug prices on a pharmaceutical marketing and distribution cartel, the myth that cheaper generic drugs are less effective, a penchant among doctors in favor of multinational companies and heavy dependence on imported raw materials.

"The system has been so co-opted, if not corrupted, by some of these companies that the people are not left with so much choice," said Pagdanganan, whose office aims to cut in half by 2010 prices of medicines commonly bought by the poor.

Amend law

Jim Sibbaganan, a smoke carrier and officer of the Stroke Survivors Support Foundation, said he has seen so many stroke survivors unable to buy needed medicines.

"These days are the price of the medicines; they just close their eyes because they could not afford to buy them," he said.

The coalition for cheaper medicine supports a bill that would amend local patent laws to keep them in sync with WTO rules, including clearly allowing parallel importation of drugs.

The bill has been endorsed by a joint forum committee for plenary approval.

The PITC said government will put up more "people's drug stores" selling cheaper medicines to provide competition to big pharmaceuticals. Price controls for all patent medicines, and a cap in spending on pharmaceutical advertising, also are being considered.

Proponents of the bill said it has a good chance of being passed. A majority of the senators, including Senate President Franklin Drilon, have already signed the bill as co-sponsors.

AP

To solon, passage of '06 national budget dim

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. RODOLFO ANTONIO B. IS RESIGNED TO the non-enactment of the P1.053-trillion 2006 national budget in view of the stalemate position of the senators on a P64-billion deficit.

Osmeña said yesterday that restarting the stalled bicameral conference talks on the budget during the congressional break would be easy, but forging an agreement to pave the way for its passage would be tough.

"The blame can get shared. All we can do is sit across the table and smile at each other and that is already the deadline. But whatever anything substantial can be accomplished, that's slim," he said in a press forum at the Senate.

"Let's just talk about the 2007 budget," he said.

No sign

Osmeña said (but so far there had been no sign the senators would budge from their position to cite P26.3-billion in lump sum appropriations from the today's programmed funds and P37.9 billion from 16 agencies' funds.

"We can be diplomatic, continue to talk, but our senators is the Filipino people. We felt bad because we just wanted taxes by so much and here we are trying to cover it up for the House and Malacañang by removing the cuts that we made," he said.

Pork barrel cuts

"So I cannot agree on this. We will have a truncated budget," he said.

The cuts mainly involved "pork barrel" items and the senators use to reason to change their position, Osmeña said.

"They want the entire P1.053 trillion. We will not allow that excess, which is too much pork, to be wasted, to go into private pockets and we cannot sanction that," he said.

Optimistic Villar

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr., head of the Senate bicameral panel, said he remained optimistic the bicameral talks on the budget could be restarted during the congressional break to pave the way for its approval next month.

He said he wouldn't mind if the long-delayed budget was passed when Congress opens its third regular session on July 24 and President Macapagal-Arroyo presents the 2007 budget.

Congress adjourned Thursday last week without enacting the 2006 budget after talks between senators and congressmen fell through over strong disagreements on the cuts made by the Senate.

Palace threat

The senators tried to break the impasse by proposing to realign the P26.3 billion sliced from the programmed funds, but the House insisted that all the cuts be restored while Malacañang threatened to veto the cuts.

Osmeña said that operating on the 2005 P997.56-billion budget for the rest of the year would limit the government's spending authority, but would lead to a lower budget deficit and borrowings.

"We will save a lot of money; our credit rating will go up if we have that kind of savings," he said.

Refuting Villar, the senator said the Senate was considering providing a supplemental budget for education and health services should the 2005 budget be truncated in the second half of the year.

Ex-colonel pins Guardians leader in coup d'etat trial

By Tarra V Quismundo

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) YESterday presented a retired police colonel as it began its bid to pin down a former bank executive to planning and executing the July 27, 2003, takeover of the Oakwood Premier apartment hotel in Makati City.

Lolordo Jaegan, identified as the founder and concurrent chair of the Guardians International Inc. (GII), was put on the stand as the first prosecution witness in the coup d'etat trial of Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI) leader Ernesto Maculdyo.

Jaegan testified that Maculdyo's group allegedly staged a rally near Oakwood on the day of the mutiny "to give moral support to the rebel soldiers."

Maculdyo was one of seven people the DOJ had charged on July 24 in connection with the 2003 mutiny. The accused included PGBI founder, former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, and Oakwood lead leader.

On direct examination, Jaegan, known as the supreme head of the GII umbrella with 18 subordinate Guardians chapters, told the court yesterday that he received several text messages from past and present PGBI members on the eve of the failed mutiny warning him that the group was mobilizing its members to support a coup act to take place the next day.

Splinter group

He also portrayed the PGBI as a "splinter group" of the GII, having broken away from the helm given the former's views on the government. The GII, an organization founded in the early 1980s, supported the administration.

"We wanted to show that this was planned, that it was not a coincidence. Because if it was, why would he [Jaegan] be receiving such messages as early as the night before saying that a rally was going to push through the next day?" said Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon.

Jaegan testified in receiving text messages on July 26, 2003, two of which read: "Today ang rally bukas. Ano [by] time?" and "Malabuhay ang PGBI, military junta," he said Mejo was the codename of Maculdyo, who admitted to such claim in an interview after the hearing.

He added that the planned mobilization by the anti-government PGBI prodded the GII to organize roughly 3,000 of its members to take part in a prayer rally at the Edsa Shrine on the 6th of the month.

Asked why, Jaegan said: "To clearly express our support to the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo and to oppose, denounce and disown the actions of PGBI in Oakwood."

He said he also asked one of his subordinates to confirm the presence of PGBI at Oakwood and later verified Maculdyo's participation in the mobilization.

Storm coincidental

In an interview after the hearing, Maculdyo denied Jaegan's claims, and said the PGBI's rally in Oakwood was coincidental, as the group was actually en route to Edsa Shrine at the time to rally against the impeachment bid for then's upcoming State of the Nation Address.

He added that PGBI could not possibly be a "splinter group" from the GII, as the former was established earlier than the GII. He also characterized Jaegan as shadowy, having been expelled from the PGBI in 2000.

"If our interest were to support [a] [the rebel soldiers], why would we bring our wives and children to that rally when we know that we were facing violent confrontation and a coup na lang? That's just against human nature," said Maculdyo, currently detained in the Makati City Jail.

GMA, Cabinet to Isabela today

By Christine D. Avendaño

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO AND her Cabinet are scheduled to visit Cauayan, Isabela, today to begin a series of meetings with regional leaders and come up with "mega" development plans that may be included in her State of the Nation (SONA) address next month and the proposed 2007 national budget.

"The objective of the out-of-town meetings is to review and revitalize investment and development groupings from a supra-regional perspective," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters.

Four provinces

The President and her Cabinet will go to four provinces that represent the four "enlarged regional groupings" Malacañang is planning to turn into "investment and development areas."

These are North Luzon (which covers Regions 1, 2 and the Cordillera Autonomous Region, plus Aurora and Nueva Ecija), Metro Luzon (Regions 3, 4A and Metro Manila), Central Philippines (Regions 4B, 5, 6, 7 and 8), and Mindanao (Regions 9 to 12 and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao).

Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo said the consultations were aimed at achieving a more "closer partnership" between Malacañang and the local governments.

Sona vision

Saludo said that during the Cabinet meeting last week, the President raised the need to involve the regional development councils in formulating her Sona "vision."

"The President has to move toward a larger grouping, larger areas that will be able to harness even greater economic potential and synergies, and complementation within these areas," he told reporters.

"With this larger areas, we hope to bring in more investment and equity from the public sector but also from the private sector," Saludo said.

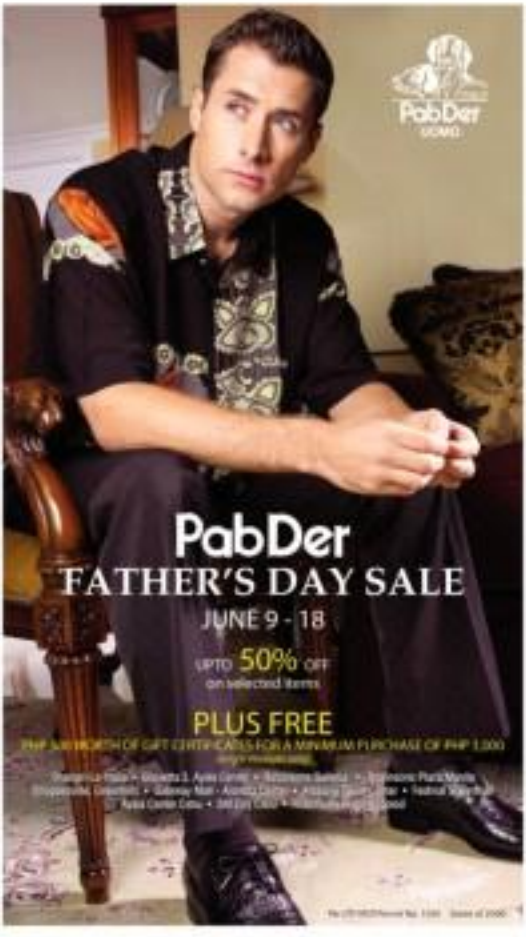
He said the Cabinet would review these integration and come up with priority initiatives "that will be then given to the President for inclusion in her Sona and for priority implementation."

Cabinet reordering

The integration or "development blueprint" that will be drawn for these areas will be monitored by the Cabinet to ensure that they are implemented.

Saludo said the President and her Cabinet will next week Metro Luzon and Mindanao before Ms Arroyo's trip to Europe.

Their trip to Central Philippines will come in July, he said.



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

The pain of contempt

EDITORIAL

OMBUDSMAN MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ HAS A historic chance to contribute to the cause of election reform, by getting to the bottom of the anomalous Mega Pacific election automation deal. Instead, she has spent a lot of time doing essentially nothing about the case, until a March 28 resolution of the Supreme Court forced her to get serious. Since then, and especially after the Court reiterated its order in another resolution on May 3, she has spent a good amount of her precious time indulging in what is apparently a new legal principle: wounded pride.

She has repeatedly held before the Court that its directive had undermined the independence of her constitutionally mandated office, and that it could not be "directed" to do anything because it was "not a party in the case."

This position not only legally untenable, but a snobbery of the true responsibilities of the Ombudsman. It is nothing more than institutional, or perhaps even personal, hubris, and we are glad that the Supreme Court has put Gutierrez in her place.

All this angst-filled huffing and puffing by one of the most powerful officials in government has obscured what is in fact at stake in the case: A grave anomaly was committed, by public officials and what the Court called "conspiring private individuals." It is the Ombudsman's duty, as the government's chief guidhound, to find out how it was committed, and to prosecute those behind the anomaly. We believe the resolution of the Mega Pacific case will help our democratic project, by pinpointing the groundwork for yet another attempt at the long-overdue and most necessary automation of the election process. But we need not go that far; the prosecution and conviction of those liable will already go a long way to restoring public confidence in our public institutions.

Instead of seizing on the historic opportunity, however, Gutierrez has quarreled with the Supreme Court. She has taken issue with the Court's decision instructing her office to do what it was mandated to do in the first place. Like a French king, she has wondered aloud about the meaning (hoot): "With the high court's directive, what will prevent lower courts from directing us?"

The more appropriate question, however, is: What prevented the Ombudsman from "acting promptly," as it is mandated by the Constitution, to investigate the P1.3-billion anomaly?

Consider this timeline. Last Feb. 14, the Ombudsman was ordered by the Supreme Court to "show cause why [her office] should not be held in contempt of court for its failure to fully comply with the Court's directive in the Jan. 13, 2004 Decision." A month later, on March 20, the Ombudsman was ordered "to report [to the Court] on a regular basis—once every three months—the steps it has taken and the corresponding results of those actions" in the Mega Pacific case.

Some five weeks later, on May 3, the Court was forced to issue yet another order: "The Office of the Ombudsman shall, under pain of contempt, report to this Court by June 30, 2006, its final determination of whether a probable cause exists against" those involved in the anomaly.

The letter day, the Supreme Court denied with finality the Ombudsman's motion for reconsideration "for utter lack of merit." It noted that its directive to the Ombudsman did not "in any way impinge upon the [Ombudsman's] independence as provided under the Constitution." It belabored the obvious: "Nowhere in the questioned resolution did the Court demand that the Ombudsman decide or make a specific determination—one way or the other—of the culpability of any of the parties." It also described Gutierrez's "protestations of judicial interference" in unambiguous terms, calling it "strange and out of tune."

Unfortunately for the Ombudsman, who used to be the President's chief legal counsel and was a law school classmate of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, she talked under the impression that she still belongs to the Malacañang choir. She will continue to do so, because as the controversial Mega Pacific case, the Palace—unlike the Supreme Court, or the Senate, or even the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines—has always sung a different tune.

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Why is somebody lusting for BIR top post?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT'S TRUE TIME THERE IS A PLOT TO UNSEAT Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag, but the reason is not that the BIR failed to achieve its collection target for April. There is only an excuse. The real reason could be that a Cabinet member wants to put his own protégé in the BIR.

Why? For billions of reasons.

It was not a Cabinet member, but Rep. Joey Salceda, President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic adviser, who asked for Buñag's head. Yes, has the Cabinet member to a former congressman himself, and you know the camaraderie in the House of Representatives. It is like the camaraderie among members of the Mafia.

And who is the protégé? He is a city treasurer. He had transferred to a big city from a small, or city, where he was facing several lawsuits. The new mayor (does he know the treasurer's past?) likes him because he has been able to increase the city's tax collection.

But the treasurer's style is like that of the sheriff of Nottingham. When a taxpayer fails to pay his real estate taxes, he immediately orders the seizure of his property and sells it at public auction. And here is the strange part: he does not give the taxpayer the mandatory one-year grace period to pay the tax. There is always a ready buyer who buys the property at such barrom prices. When the property owner protests and threatens a lawsuit, he tells the owner to reimburse the purchase price to the buyer. But the buyer demands a hefty interest on his money, which interest the owner is forced to pay. (The buyers, by the way, always manage to corner the choice properties at bargain prices during auctions.)

I know of at least two property owners who sued the treasurer for doing this. One did not even know that his house and lot where he and his family were living had been sold at public auction until it was too late. The other didn't know that he had to reimburse the buyer for his property's value before he could get his property back.

I read the other day about school officials lamenting that there were not enough scholarships available to poor students. This is like one lamenting in an ocean, but the heirs of the late Sen. Elizabeth Zobel and Senator Ramon Magsaysay, Jr., associations of particular personalities, are doing their bit to provide scholarships to deserving students. They have been just given scholarships to journalism and Manuel Luis Bendanillo Lindayen of the University of the Philippines, University of Sto. Tomas, Ignatius, Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) and the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. The first scholars were presented to journalists at the Front Page last week. Initially, there are six scholars, but the number will increase by six every year (and possibly seven if Pamantasan ng Maynila is included) among the schools, or even more if there are more donors to the foundation) as the year's freshmen ascend to higher years.

Applicants are screened by the universities and must pass certain requirements, the most important of which is that they must be poor and must maintain a middle rank during at the end of every semester. The scholarship includes tuition, book allowance and a monthly stipend.

It is too late now for the present semester, but qualified students can apply for next semester at the university they want to enroll in, and at the Immaculate Blanded clubhouse.

I know there are many scholarships available for bright students, but I wish more individuals and companies will donate to scholarship foundations. There are so many students out there who need help. There are many bright students who, like Dorsey despised of water and nourishment, cannot blame because they cannot afford the cost of studying in today's schools.

I personally know the value of such scholarships. My own daughter finished her valedictorian at the Philippine Science High School, a Courtesy scholar at the University of the Philippines-Diliman where she finished her biology course summa cum laude, and a university scholar at Columbia. For her undergrad course. My other daughter was also a scholar in Salzburg, Austria, and in Spain, while my son was a scholar at Sophia University in Japan.

Latin America's left turn: Will we follow?

PASSION FOR REASON

René C. Pangalangan

SINCE 2000, LATIN AMERICAN ELECtorates have brought leftist coalitions into power. Leftist presidents now preside over most of America's southern hemisphere. And the list is growing: Lula da Silva in Brazil, Lucio Gutiérrez in Ecuador, Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, Nestor Kirchner in Argentina, Michelle Bachelet in Chile, Tabare Vázquez in Uruguay.

Filipino conservatives will shudder at some of their intellectuals: Chile's Bachelet is the daughter of an air force general who opposed Pinochet and died in prison, and the heavily wrinkled undercover for the Socialist Youth, was tortured and detained. Ecuador's Gutiérrez is an ex-colonel and former coup plotter. Interestingly enough he Peter Ibarson, Bachelet is a parliamentand Uruguay's Vázquez, an oncologist.

The people in all Los Indios in the Philippines. A dark decade of dictatorship ends, followed by democratic politics and market-based economics. Then fed up with corruption, crony capitalism and economic programs that have not improved the lot of the common folk, voters vote elsewhere more every from established political parties, dismayed with the rigidity of elite factions taking their turn at the till. Mr. Pangs have actually invented a term for this alternating function of resident taxpayers: "Insulares." "Array with them all!" is the cry rejecting the political class, in a country with the most unequal distribution of wealth.

Jorge Castañeda, formerly Mexico's foreign minister, is the author of "Utopia Unarmed: The Latin American Left after the Cold War" and "Compañero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara." He recently wrote an essay in Foreign Affairs about "a tale of two Lefts"—the first having realized some key open-minded and modern beliefs. I will call the pragmatic Left; and the second stridently populist and communist (no power rather than ideology) the populist Left.

We must embrace the first, Castañeda says, but not the second, and he detects signs of pragmatism in many of the elected leftists who have toned down their rhetoric, pledged to live within International Monetary Fund guidelines, and made their peace with big business.

In a radical turn at all possible in the Philippines? Yes, our McCarthyist hangover notwithstanding. Disillusion with establishment politics is deep and can arise across social classes; there many our three formerly believe that life will improve simply by changing leaders or constitutions? Only the Left can offer, discredit or not, any alternative visions, and it can find irrefutable data objective ideology, the old orders" united front."

Why is it not probable? One, the United States' only tolerable (read: leftist) is its own bureaucrats, for as long as they do not interfere their own Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Ladens. But we have our own terrorist nurseries in Mindanao, and I doubt if the US will suffer discordant voices when at least one more speaks Arabic.

Two, Castañeda's fine distinction between the pragmatic and the populist Left does not exist in the Philippines. Some leftists may sound pragmatic, especially when they speak "technocratese" to their IT and GMO fandemic. After all, it is easy to support service oriented into mercenous policies. "Down with Investor oppression!" translates into a call for "Anti-corruption, Public accountability and Transparency." "Fight for peoples' rights!" translates into "Stakeholder Participation and Democracy!" But the Latin means persists to cause populist interventions.

Third, these leftists were in powerful elections and on the back of Left-led coalitions. Ours is a terrain of armed elections, a non-credible Comelec, and non-platform-based alliances. Filipino rightists have successfully adopted leftwing tactics of community organizing and "political reeducation," but I detail the day when Filipino leftists embrace the rightwing expertise in schooling and dealing, fundraising and home finding.

Fourth, the Philippine Left's immediate raison is the most immediate and persistent needs of the majority and fosters a culture of honorables schedules. That mindset blends in well with our feudal and Catholic values. It glorifies sharing, which is good, but legitimizes passivity in correspondences, which is not.

And why can it be desirable, at least on ostensibly political questions? Because populism does present one real virtue, from the unsentimental, touchy-feely, personalized game of our mass politics, populists reserves one (5-star) kick on power. Ironically, the people's sense of where things have gone was fine. Than the unconscionable anti-Marcos slogan, "Tama na! Sobra na! Ala na!"

Sure the public sense of justice can be deadened by history. Witness the lack of outrage over the dismissal of Satyan Diokno's regional boulevard and the targeted killings of local journalists. But we witnessed that slow but assured shifting the last few years, as the forgiving and fatalistic Pinoy seemed patiently until Erap's climb in August 1983. But he'll come to fall by 1986!

In the matter of despair, there are those who speak nothing less than expulsion with zeal, and for us Marxists Left is with hostility. But it is no terrible heresy to find inclusion outside ex-radikalismore politics.

Comment is to panzalan@gmail.com

Make or break

ANALYSIS

Amanda Buensalida

PRESIDENT'S ARE BIG THAT THE COUNTRY is heading toward a make or break showdown over constitutional reforms during the next sessions of Congress which begins in July. Its outcome will decide new fundamental issues, whether President Macapagal-Arroyo will serve out her term till 2010 or the Senate will be abolished. But the President and the Senate are aware of the life-and-death stakes in this showdown. No pressure, indeed.

If the President succeeds in rewriting the Constitution to make a shift to the parliamentary system through a people's initiative, the Senate will cease to exist, and the present 2004 elections may be a postmortem vote all around.

The dramatic impasse has to end. There's no middle ground here.

But the camps have begun to sharpen their weapons and are prepared to fight. The President fired the opening salvo of this struggle in her State-of-the-Nation Address last Monday—when she said, "Our people will soon be called upon to make a decision: this one thing to say and to end to the political distractions that have stalled our efforts to create our nation to the most level [of development]." She added: "The choice is for us to make whether we continue to live up to the vision of our national heroes or continue to watch helplessly while our country's progress stagnates and our economy is trapped in the state of uncertainty."

To make sure that her message was clearly understood, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita amplified that the President was referring to the Senate's refusal to adopt Joint Resolution No. 10, the initiative, after Congress submitted with the Senate and the House of Representatives deadlocked over the option of convening a constituent assembly to consider constitutional revisions.

"Unless the impasse ... can be resolved," said the President's political adviser Gabriel Claudio, "I guess it would have to be a people's initiative." With a hint of a threat, Claudio said that those leaders and members who have been pushing the constituent assembly formula were saying they would "throw their support behind the people's initiative if the deadlock is not broken."

How the highly antagonistic people's initiative will evolve during Arroyo's remaining presidency, he added, depends on nothing more solid than claims by the administration that Jigger ng Bayan, a government-sponsored organization, had already collected more than the required nine million signatures. In support of a petition to ask Commission on Elections to start the process of amending the Charter from the campaign overseers the Iloilo-based legal crusader—a Supreme Court ruling that the people's initiative is illegal because it lacks an enabling legislation—is still hedging on the issue.

By making people's initiative the last throw of the dice, the administration is reworking the strategy that has allowed it to win on various anti-Arroyo movements that have unsuccessfully tried to oust the President through rallies in streets or through impeachment by Congress. The strategy is built on the support of the President's weak constituency mobilized by local officials and of the Luzon coalition, her political machine in the 2004 elections, which gave her a majority in the House that quashed the impeachment complaint last year.

The urgency of the people's initiative is underscored by the fact that Cha cha has to be jumpstarted before the end of the year. Otherwise, there will not the building of nail-torn decision about truth could change the balance of power in Congress and allow the Luzon majority in the House.

The President is bracing for the showdown on Cha cha as Congress nearest adjourns for the break she has crafted that has enabled her to win the constituent gains. She won't accept the promises pushed by the Cha cha supporters and blamed a recession of half of her Cabinet in July last year, ostensibly as pro-spinning a collapse of the regime.

But the anti-Arroyo movement warned that the President's opponents cannot muster the numbers to oust her and that she had led her to adopt the strategy of trying to win the battle now Cha cha by walking her road constituency which has not made enough cause with the urban based constituency of protest.

The regime has survived not because it has broad popular support but because of the inability of her opponents to mobilize sufficient numbers on the streets to call for an removal of support from the government for other reasons, including the lukewarm international community and the mild dictator. She is playing on this weakness. Her opponents have not argued their case for her ouster persuasively enough to bring more people to their side and into the streets where it matters. They have to do more than throw angry rhetoric and self-righteous political moralizing to bring down a government. The ordinary people do think. They have to reason more than to hysterical name-calling, and, as her rivals must, they must document their staying at home) thus disappoint others.

Ahead of this looming showdown, a question that is very hard to explain itself was the Nepomuceno, Ali. Her survival is a mystery, because the regime is technically unpopular. But to the terms of the revelations of the past year, the President committed to have the numbers to counter the unnatural forces.

This issue not of enough between the President and the forces arrayed against her will be fought on another people power front and in another form: a people's initiative, which is a downfall of Edsa.

Media decoys

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THERE WAS A STORY IN CITY DAILY'S INQUIRER about a "three-layer shield" of 14 women of the same height and build as "Nicole," the 23-year-old former beauty queen who is believed to have left on the island of Jolo by her boyfriend.

The kids differ on no decoys as three media women during Nicole's appearance in town. They are also reasonably present Rhodel Fernandez reporting for ABS-CBN's Bandila, the journalist ("Ma'am") is not her real name), dispatched of how the true name one, after all, she has the use of her life to live and anonymity in her town statement of a "normal" life after all this has passed.

I read this story with very ambivalent feelings as a woman and a feminist. I could very well understand how Nicole must feel, and the determination of the women in her support group. But as a member of media, I could understand the method of the media people who went to the extreme to protect the identity of the subject who were their only assignment. I was also a little bit ashamed of what these motivations were, knowing that the One paper to run a front page photo of Nicole," or the ABS-CBN anchor to air her face could right-fully stop dragging a story.

Why this could be considered a "story" seems obvious. People are naturally curious about this young woman who has become the star of a high-profile kidnapping case—even the newly elected president has put an alleged crime, but also interest issues like foreign military intervention (or support), pro-political alliances and gender and human rights.

But should media also—and seek to outdo—the public curiosity about how Nicole looks? What public interest would be served by showing her getaway? Should a media managers to know judge the worth of her visions?

DURING the deliberations on the jurisprudence and rape bill, I swear about a provision in the death legislation that would make it a crime to publicly disclose the identity of a rape survivor without her consent. I wish that such a provision could also be extended to compel the media to stop covering cases of rape and other incidents of violence, even in the need to raise public awareness about such crimes remains. It would be better instead, for women's and victims' rights groups to work with media organizations on the formulation of guidelines that the media could voluntarily adopt in the course of their coverage of rape cases.

I still believe we cannot and should not legislate media behavior, or the scope of media coverage, be it of a rape trial or of presidential intrigue, but nothing prevents media organizations themselves from formulating reasonable guidelines on their behavior and enforcing them among their employees. Set ups, after all, human dignity is first before we are "media people."

In the 1990s, a woman who was jogging in Central Park in New York was set upon by a group of youths who were on a "wilding" spree. She filed charges of rape and assault against the teenagers and the subsequent trial was one of the most sensational stories in the United States that year.

But her identity was never revealed. Her family appealed to all the media entities covering the circumstances of her case that the media not name or carry her picture and, to their credit, all of them, including New York's swollen tabloids, acceded to the family's request. Even the case, the media only identified her as the "victim" in court.

Can Philippine media exercise the same level of restraint and consideration?

THE SUPREME Court seems to be losing patience with the Office of the Ombudsman. Complaining it for failing to act upon an order first issued two years ago, to investigate election probable cause cases for the filing of charges against Commission on Elections officials for a fraudulent computerization program.

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez has promised that her office has begun investigating the deal, which involved P1.3 billion of public money spent on a poll computerization program which never proved that pressed. But it's company only is basically. In fact of the case, the Ombudsman's investigation into when the basic facts and findings had been settled by the Supreme Court itself.

In an order refraining the Ombudsman, the Court told the Ombudsman "does not refuse" the status that the anti-graft body "grossly only on us" "incomplete, indeed, the Ombudsman insists on its "independence" from the Supreme Court and says it need not be "compelled" into any sort of action.

But the Ombudsman need only study my the 2004 Supreme Court ruling on the documents who proved the Comelec officials and suppliers are culpable and should be charged.

* * *

IF YOU will recall, the Supreme Court in 2004 ruled that the Commission on Elections had no right to open bidding rules when it awarded the contract for the automated counting and canvassing of ballots to the Mega Pacific consortium, which did not have enough sophistication for the project.

The Court then ordered the Ombudsman to determine who among the public officials and private individuals, if any, were culpable and what charges should be filed against them.

Instead of doing so, reports have it, the Ombudsman has asked the Supreme Court to dismiss the case

Football suits Filipinos better than basketball

LETTERS

LET ME CLARIFY TWO POINTS IN ARSENIO Evangelista's wonderful commentary on football. ("Soccer is the sport of the underclass," FOL 6/12/06)

Firstly, there is a third Asian country currently playing in the World Cup and that is Iran. In fact, Iran has more players playing in major European leagues than Korea and Japan.

The other point is whether football is still a sport of the underclass—as economic power and physical height are said to be of little significance, or not at all, in winning "the beautiful game." While the assertion serves to encourage Filipinos to embrace the game more than basketball, football's worldwide word speaks differently.

Japan and South Korea are easily the two richest countries in Asia and Iran, with its abundant supply of oil, is even in the path of developing its own nuclear capabilities.

Small African nations managed to qualify for the World Cup precisely because there is not much difference in the physical attributes of their peoples and the economic conditions of their countries. The differences is determined largely by certain African players who play in various European leagues. The same goes for the Latin American countries, like Brazil or Argentina.

What they lack in resources they make up with their athletic, particularly in height. Take the case of Ecuador which scored a 2-0 upset over Poland, owing to the superb performance of three tall men—goalkeeper Mora, a six footer; striker Delgado, 6' 2", and team captain Hurtado, another six footer.

Most of the European powerhouses include giants for strikers or forwards who give them scoring advantage during contact or free kicks. The mighty Czechs, one of the top favorites, have 6' 7" holder who scored a goal before getting injured in the 2-0 routing of the United States squad. England has its 6' 4" Crouch; Italy its 5' 4" Totti; Netherlands its super 6'3" forward Huntelaar; and Serbia-Montenegro its 6'3" giant Ilijic. Brazil's top two strikers, Ronaldo and Adriano stand at 6' 1" and 6' 2," respectively from South Korea's Ahn Jung-hwan and Cha Du-ri to shorty-size Japan may not have tall scorers but it has two reserve goalkeepers who both stand at 6' 1."

And almost every squad in the World Cup has six footers in charge of blocking the shots of opponents. The recent history of these giant keepers are: Yazalde Iran (6' 3"), Lehmann (6' 3"), Cech (6' 5"), Robinson (6' 4"), Dida (6' 5") and Stalteri (6' 3"). Spain's Casillas at flat six feet is already considered by many as a short guard at the posts.

But despite this trend, football still fits the Filipino physique far better than basketball does. We still stand to perform better in this international game and can produce our own Pele or Maradona.

—Benjie Pineda (father) and Gabriel Pineda (son), Ayala Alabang Northern Futsal Club, 102 Bingalan St., Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City

Political cleansing back is back

SIXTY-BALANCE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1081 by Marcos in 1972, the era of fascism in the Philippines began. Political dissenters, student activists, labor militants, peasants and suspected communist were arrested, imprisoned or killed.

More than three decades later, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed PP 1017, and a new form of fascism raised its head. From 2001 to 2006, there have been more than 200 extra-judicial killings of political activists, and to mention the dozens of journalists murdered.

The Arroyo administration has denied involvement. The Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police have feigned innocence. But the recent abductions, detentions and torture of 31 men so called "Iraq 31" showed the hands of the military in the operations.

Not too long ago, when the Iron Curtain fell, the Federation of Yugoslavia broke up, and the world was shocked by the extent of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Serbia. Perpetrators of these "ethnic cleansing" were arrested and tried before the international court of justice in The Hague.

Around the same time, a lot larger drama was being witnessed in Rwanda, about a million of Hutu tribe members were massacred in the downtown Theater. Its government functionaries had to be set up in nearby Tanzania except those accused of genocide.

We should not forget the 66 million Chinese people killed under the current Chinese political system, surpassing the combined casualties of World War I and II, or the Pinay Peoga and its killing fields that our people being murdered just for wearing eyeglasses.

Of course, history tells us of the diaspora of the Jews. Now we are appalled by the Israeli military decimating Palestinians with impunity. A State of Defensive might no longer be feasible in this format for lack of neo-resistant people.

We are also familiar with the tragedy in Afghanistan, where an internationally sanctioned invasion opened the gates of Guantanamo prison to many battalions of al-Qaeda emperor of total, justice—and were light and air.

In Iraq, in defiance of the United Nations, a UN-like-led coalition would have to answer judgment of history for around 50 people killed daily.

We still call the Philippines a republic and a democracy but instead of tolerating political dissent and silencing the Arroyo administration minds accused by the Commission of Human Rights and Amnesty International of being behind the "pattern of executions with impunity," which is not unlike the "salvaging" of the despotic rule of Latin America.

Not so long ago, the military leaked a list of "enemies of the state"—composed of militants, lawmakers, students, peasants, even men of the Church. Now it has the opportunistic Opisa Ramsey Lapu, allegedly implemented by her meddled generals accused of human rights abuses.

Despite the repeal of the anti-subversion law, political cleansing is en earnest. We can only hope that the present administration never re-enacts martial meanings manner.

—NELSON B. LLEVES, ambanador (ret.), nbalves@lycos.com

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Across the NATION

LIFE in Baguio courts was disrupted by a bomb threat that sent policemen, like this officer with his bomb-sniffing dog, checking every nook and cranny of Baguio's court offices.

Bomb scare alters court schedule in Baguio City

BAGUIO CITY—TWO BOMB THREATS MADE IN succession on Thursday stopped the scheduled hearings in this city's courts.

A man, claiming to be a "friend (sakitan)," made the threats, police said.

But some judges said they believed the threats were linked to an order that the Supreme Court was scheduled to issue that would penalize some Baguio judges over moral-and-legal imbroglios.

Police also said two souls on Thursday were scheduled to deliberate on a complaint filed against **barangay officials for holding bingo** games to raise community funds.

The city government claimed that the bingo operations were intended to camouflage jueteng operations in these villages.

Employees of the office of the Baguio prosecutor received the first threat at 9:30 a.m., alerting them to an explosive device that was scheduled to detonate between 11 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Police explosives experts scanned the justice hall but found no explosive. A second call was made at about 10 a.m., repeating the threats after employees were allowed to resume work.

Judge Ruben Ayson, of the regional trial court here, said he took the threat seriously because of last week's blasts in Metro Manila and Batangas.

Two other judges, Fernando Ill Bandoman and Amelio Caguioa, proceeded with their court schedules while employees left the hall.

Some court employees told the Baguio Times they were convinced that the threats were timed to coincide with the anticipated Supreme Court suspension of three Baguio judges and the dismissal of another judge volume Ayson had accused of immorality, fraud and various other forms of misconduct.

Text messages began circulating on Wednesday, saying that some Baguio judges were to be reprimanded for their public disputes. —Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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CHR says it can't stop Palparan deployment

By Tonette Orejas
Mid-Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—HUMAN Rights Palparan cannot be stopped from sending Army troopers to civilian areas in Central Luzon since he is doing that "within the mandate" of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to end insurgency, the top official of the Commission on Human Rights in the region said on Thursday.

Lawyer Jasmin Nazarea Reglos, CHR regional director, said the agency would focus on monitoring the conduct of about 500 troopers in 17 barangays in Pampanga and Bulacan where Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, had reassigned soldiers and established detachments since last week.

The urban centers were assigned to the City of San Fernando, Angeles City and Mabalacat town in Pampanga and in Malolos City and Baliuag, Hagonoy, Paniqui and San Miguel town in Bulacan.

"We can't meddle in that mandate," Reglos said, adding the CHR would closely look into reports of human rights violations.

Two transport leaders in Barangay Pulong Buhangin, Angeles City were missing but surfaced on Wednesday after soldiers questioned their supposed ties with the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Organizers of the Workers Alliance in Region III, a chapter of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, reported being tailed by military men.

Reglos said it came when soldiers commit violations or abuses, villagers should report them to barangay human rights action centers.

"These centers have been in existence since 1995 and are being revived now to complement the regional CHR's 26 personnel.

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CEFIRO

CHILDREN at the elementary school of San Juan in Catigaran town wear masks for protection against ash falls from Bulusan.

Village execs condemn resurgence of 'jueteng'

LEGAZPI CITY—THE LEGAZPI City Sangguniang in Davao City, Caraballo wrote condemned the resurgence of unabated jueteng in 25 barangays in their place in a resolution dated June 8 urging the government to immediately take a decisive action to stop the illegal numbers game.

The group, supported by some 100 concerned residents, also observed Independence Day on June 12 with a rally denouncing the illegal numbers game.

The resolution said rampant jueteng operations in Camalig town do not only harm the economy of the state but also encourages citizens to gamble.

In the same resolution, the Legazpi Sangguniang requested authorities, particularly the Philippine National Police, Department of Interior and Local Government, Commission Hon. Gov. Jesse Tigano and President Macapagal-Arroyo to enforce Republic Act 9287 or the anti-illegal Gambling Law which provides stiff penalties for those involved in illegal gambling.

"It is our moral and social obligation to eradicate jueteng which causes a deterioration of values, erodes the morality of every citizen who depends on this illegal game of chance, makes us ashamed by and victims of corruption," the district and appointed public officials, and even greedy private individuals who are only after fabricated gains, without revenues going back to the government," the group said.

When the inquirer tried to contact Bishop Benjamin Almonte of Daet for comment, Fr. Ernesto Cerin, chancellor of the archdiocese, said the bishop was not available because he was busy preparing for a condolence call spoken on his behalf.

Cerin said the Church is steadfastly against the illegal numbers game and any form of immorality.

He said the advocacy against jueteng should not only small government officials and people behind it but should people to realization that jueteng was not good and that it had never made the people who patronize it any richer.

A veteran media practitioner in Daet contacted by the Inquirer confirmed rampant jueteng operations in Camarines Norte, with three draws a day.

He cited the winning combinations on June 14 as 29-3, 13-36 and 33-22. In yesterday morning's draw, the combination 35-36 won.

Each P1 was P9000, he added.

Jueteng has also been reported rampant in some parts of Camarines Sur, Sorsogon and Albay.

Upon learning of the resurgence of jueteng in some parts of the province, Albay Gov. Benjamin G. Gonzales has issued police chief Supt. Roque Ezmilera to immediately direct town police chief to stop the illegal numbers game.

A certain Garcia is the one behind jueteng in most parts of Albay province, Ephraim Aguilar, PIR Southern Luzon Bureau

Air, water tested around Bulusan

CASTILLEJOS, SORSOGON—IT remains safe for animals to drink from rivers and springs in this town, according to an environment specialist who conducted water tests in barangay Irrigadon in this town as part of the preparedness plan should Mt. Bulusan erupt.

Engineer Jules Montoya, senior environment specialist of the Environment Management Bureau Bicol office, said the water was still safe but he was reminded of tests made to find out the water's level of acidity and alkalinity.

He could not say, however, if the water was also safe for human consumption.

Engineer Rommel Gapuzan, also a senior environment specialist of EMB Bicol, gathered all samples in the water villages, but the result of the testing, according to him, would only be available next week since the air sample would still be brought to the EMB Bicol laboratory in Legazpi City for analysis.

Castigaran says the first water where the EMB Bicol conducted water and air tests.

Other areas

The EMB personnel will go to the other affected towns like Irosin and Juban in the coming days to conduct the same tests.

Castigaran Mayor Edwin Hamor and municipal health officer Salvador Isidro Jr.said have been going around the town to conduct an information campaign and to distribute face masks.

Yesterday, they went to San Juan Elementary School in Barangay San Juan, Castigaran to distribute face masks to the students.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is set to visit the town of Juban on Saturday to confer with local officials of the province and the other towns affected by the Bulusan volcano.

Information from the Presidential Management Staff employees, who met with Vice Raul Lee and Juban Mayor Tito Guali-Perquia, indicated that Ms Arroyo wants to personally look at the preparations being made by the various disaster coordinating councils.

Although Bulusan appears to be calm, its eruption remains imminent

A Phivolcs bulletin issued at 8:30 a.m. on June 13 advised the public to consider the high possibility of explosions that are likely to generate ash falls and affect the northern portion of the volcano.

A brief tremor was recorded on Wednesday morning, which, volcanologists said, would indicate the movement of magma.

Releasing its alert level 2 warning, the Phivolcs advised the public to avoid the areas within the four-kilometer permanent danger zone because although Bulusan appears to be calm, its eruption remains imminent.

The bulletin warned residents near the rivers and streams around the volcano to be mindful of sudden volcanic flows due to ash and other loose volcanic deposits from the upper slopes that may move toward the direction of areas in the 4-km permanent danger zone.

With reports from Orbeta and Bobby Lobaton, PIR Southern Luzon

A CHILD wades in shallow lahar brought by a previous eruption of Bulusan.

NPAs torch bus in Agusan; attack linked to reb taxes

BUTUAN CITY—NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA) rebels torched a van while in Cotmon, Agusan del Norte on Wednesday, police said yesterday.

The botched van hold-up by the Magahong Militia Oriental arson flagged down by four rebels in Barangay Bonbon at about 8 p.m., according to SPO1 Hernani Salem, Cotmon town police investigator.

Salem said the rebels ordered the passengers to disembark before they set the bus on fire after pouring gasoline into it.

Salem said the bus owner might have failed to pay revolutionary tax to the rebels.

The 8,000-strong NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of The Philippines (CPP) and collects revolutionary taxes from businesses in its areas of operations.

It is in Washington's list of international terror groups.

The NPA has been waging a protracted war against the government for the establishment of a Maoist state for the last 37 years. Franklin M. Caligpid, PIR Northeastern Bureau

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PADDLERS brave the rapids along the Chico River in a whitewater rafting competition to promote tourism in Tabuk, Kalinga. Organizers of the competition described the river as one of the best whitewater rafting sites in the country.

Whitewater rafting boosts Tabuk tourism

TABUK, KALINGA—THE 69KM-LONG whitewater rafting course here ended on Wednesday with cheers from competing teams that braved the rapid waters and waves along the 10-km stretch of the Chico River.

Tabuk Mayor Camilo Lammam Jr. said the annual event has boosted the tourism possibilities of this upland town dubbed as the country's whitewater rafting capital.

Aside from the rapid waters of the Chico River that flow to the Cagayan Valley, the river is the biggest source of irrigation water for the region.

Balatoc village rafters topped the event, beating paddlers from the Anto-Kalinga and the Isnacanao of Sanatuyag Cagaluan, Tabuk, who came in second and third, respectively.

Danny Bowes, president of the Kalinga Raft Guides Association, said the Chico River has been one of the best whitewater rafting sites in the country.

"This Tabuk area has an average of Class-3 rapids rafting trip, which is good for beginners. The other areas in Kalinga have Classes 4 and 5 recommended for professional paddlers who have been overseas to whitewater rafting. Clay is not for commercial rafting because it is risky for rafters and only those daring enough can test this river," he said.

Tabuk Councilor Oliver Dawayi, Whitewater Rafting Challenge committee chairman, called the Tabuk whitewater trip "exhilarating." It passes through the ancient mini-rice terraces, lush green fields, pastoral villages and narrow limestone canyons.

He said the competition has united the municipality and local building efforts of paddlers and guides.

"It works wonders for a group activity," he added.

The rafters were supposed to start at the upper river portion of Sitio Tamlangan in Barangay Dao, but officials transferred the starting point to Barangay Kamog and Bulanao Creek to the Tinglayan line "to restore cultural beliefs of peace and sympathy during time of gloom," he said.

He was referring to the murder of militant Kalinga leader Rafael Wacnang Bangit, 45, at the other side of the river in Tanglagan.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI North-ern Luzon Bureau

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Going organic way to beat rising costs

BOTTLES of organic fertilizer products in Pagadian.

PAGADIAN CITY—With the increasing prices of chemical-based inputs because of rising costs of petroleum products, the only way for farmers to reduce their production is to go organic, Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban said here on Wednesday.

Inorganic fertilizers are produced where fossil fuel is processed.

Panganiban visited the city in time for the national launching of the city's Kalikasan program of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

"There is no better way to solve the high cost of farming but by going organic, which is both beneficial to farmers and to the environment," Panganiban said.

The program is supported by a P150 million grant from the Japanese government. Under the program, the DA will construct compost shredders for producing organic fertilizer.

While being feted in Zamboanga del Sur, Panganiban said Agri-Kalikasan would be implemented in at least 25 provinces in the country.

It will showcase biogas technology and other cost-efficient technologies to benefit farming communities.

He said Zamboanga del Sur was chosen as a pilot area because small farmers' associations were already using the technique and the local government has been pushing for an environment-friendly method of farming.

At last, the provincial government has banned the burning of rice straws to encourage farmers to use them in producing organic fertilizer.

"This is just the initial step for the entire country to go into organic farming," he said.

Panganiban said aside from the economic benefit of farming, organic inputs also help the environment because they are fully biodegradable.

Richard F. Saycoque, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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SEMINAR SCHEDULE

SEMINAR ROOM A (FREE ADMISSION)

JUNE 21, 2006

1:00 - 3:00 pm — Best Energy Management Practices for Steam Systems
Spirax Sarco Phils.

3:30 - 5:30 pm — CO2 Refrigerant for Industrial Refrigeration Seminar
Engr. Cesar Luis Lim

JUNE 22, 2006

10:00 am - 12:00 nn — Industrial Refrigeration Seminar with Emphasis on Liquid Overfeed System
Engr. Cesar Luis Lim

12:30 - 2:30 pm — Savings Using Variable Frequency Drives
Jupp & Company

3:00 - 6:00 pm — Thermal Energy Storage Systems Seminar
Engr. Cesar Luis Lim

JUNE 23, 2006

10:00 - 12:00 nn — Product Presentation
Schneider Electric Philippines, Inc.

12:30 - 2:30 pm — Hydrocracked Lubricant Technology
Engr. Johnson Lim, Mechatronics

4:00 - 6:00 pm — Product Presentation
Enertech Systems Industries, Inc.

ASHRAE SEMINAR ROOM B

Seminar Fee: Php 500 per topic

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JUNE 21, 2006

1:00 - 5:30 pm — Air-Conditioning Cooling Load
Engr. Rosendo C. Perez, Jr.

JUNE 22, 2006

10:00 am - 12:00 nn — Air Conditioning Equipment Selection
Engr. Levi Limson, Concepcion Carrier

12:30 - 6:00 pm — Psychrometrics
Engr. Rosendo C. Perez, Jr.

JUNE 23, 2006

10:00 - 12:00 nn — Pumps
AMSEN

12:30 - 5:00 pm — Fans & Blowers, Design and Construction
Engr. Jason Tan, Niagara Industrial Equipment Corp.

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TANAUAN principals and teachers graduate from the Bright Minds Read training and workshop courtesy of McDonald's-Charities and the Municipality of Tanauan.

McDonald's, DepEd unite for right to read

THE POPULAR SAYING, "TWO HEADS ARE better than one" wouldn't have survived to this day if it weren't an indisputable truth. Indeed, there is strength in numbers especially when a task seems too monumental to accomplish alone.

Such is the plight of thousands of 6th-grade school children who spend their elementary years performing poorly in the proficiency exams that mean the difference between moving on to high school. These are children handicapped by their inability to read. They are also the reason McDonald's Charities and the Department of Education-NCR (DepEd-NCR) have joined forces to bring forward-reading readers to 1,000 grade 1 classrooms in public schools with Bright Minds Read (BMR).

BMR is a program that aims to promote beginning reading among Filipino children in support of DepEd's goal to make "Every Child a Reader." It is also the product of DepEd-NCR's collaboration with McDonald's Charities in fulfillment of Republic Act 8525 which aims to create partnerships with businesses, foundations, NGOs and individuals towards providing much-needed assistance and service to public schools.

"McDonald's Charities firmly believes that proper education can lift kids to a better tomorrow. Our participation in BMR shows our support for DepEd-NCR's efforts in improving the quality of education in our country and in fostering a brighter future for the Filipino people," said McDonald's-Charities president Kenneth S. Yang.

4 nonreaders out of 10

BMR was created to address a 2002 DepEd-NCR survey indicating that four out of 10 first graders are nonreaders. These nonreaders become subject to "academic rust" (STAR) of not qualifying for grade two, or they fall behind for the duration of their schooling simply because they cannot read well.

In the same year, McDonald's Charities and DepEd-NCR collaborated on the pilot implementation of the BMR program. It was conducted on 4,200 grade 1 pupils in 14 schools. By the end of school year 2003, 68 percent of grade 1 pupils could read sentences and answer questions about what they read, while 89 percent had improved their comprehension skills. For 2004, the students' reading skills passed an astounding 81.53-percent mastery. As of school year 2005, BMR achieved its target of zero nonreaders with all 4,300 pupils reading with comprehension.

"We couldn't have accomplished this without the support of organizations like McDonald's Charities. Their continuous commitment to Bright Minds Read will help us reach more children and bring out their full potential as readers," said DepED-NCR Regional Director Dr. Teresita Dondoyano.

Currently there are 61 schools in Metro Manila benefiting from the BMR Program. The BMR kits are now being adopted to 500 classrooms in Caloocan City funded by Caloocan local government, and more public schools in Baguio, Cebu, Iloilo, Mandaluyong, Municipality of Baliwag, Sigue City, and Valenzuela City in Cotabato. McDonald's Charities is working hard to take the program further by expanding it to 75 target schools in the NCR and in other parts of the country where a McDonald's restaurant is present. It hopes to bring BMR kits to schools with high incidences of nonreaders in all 17 regions nationwide by 2008.

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OFW Expo complements nat'l agenda

PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO recently capsuled her support for the 5th Mandaluyong Overseas Filipino Workers, Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Expo. The expo is ongoing until June 18 at Expo Center Jhocelle Farmers Garden, in front of Farmers Market 1, Edsa, Acoseia Center in Cubao, Quezon City.

In her message to the expo organizer Mandaluyong OFW-SME Network Foundation Inc. POPOY SIBERIO, President Macapagal-Arroyo said: "Our government welcomes the holding of this expo/edition as it complements our National Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Agenda and our job generation and poverty-alleviation efforts."

POPOY SIBERIO president George Antolin said the event is a one-stop-shop for job, livelihood, investment and business opportunities which aims to empower the OFW families through entrepreneurship.

Dollars for local business

"For OFWs and their families, there is no better investment for their hard-earned dollars than establishing their own businesses. By doing this, our OFWs can look forward to a pleasant retirement from their work abroad. At the same time, they will be providing jobs and livelihood to many of our countrymen," the President said.

POPOY SIBERIO marketing director Roy Cuenca II said the three-day events for the OFW and SME families is supported by Digital Playground Marketing, Synergy 88.9 and Sun Cellular (SMS) as presenters and General Administrator Go Inc., Commcrete Inc., Duty Free Philippines, Filinvest Land Inc., Hospital Corp., Nissan Gasmanmotorcycle, Nissan Shoes Center and Prospect Publishing Inc. as sponsors.

The grand event of the POPOY SIBERIO et. al. aims to make the country's more than 8 million OFW families, the 175,000 SME families and those involved in the overseas employment and small and medium enterprise industries be aware of the various opportunities and benefits offered by the government, private and non-government organization sectors.

For more inquiries, call POPOY SIBERIO at 912-58-93.

FROM FEARFUL TO FLORAL: Dove, residence of Pedrosa, Jolo, refused to leave their homes after dark fearing for their lives. For enrolling purposes, they went to the airport or to the wharf. But Jolonens now have not one but two parks replete with flowers in the capital compound. Two huge fountains are the centerpieces of the parks. The marble fountain (above) named after the former first lady melts water 3 meters high.

Jolo's floral park a haven for war-weary folk

From page A1

residents were seen spending time at the capitol.

A breathtaking sight

"I hired a tricycle and went there. What I discovered was really a breathtaking sight," she said.

Two huge fountains are the centerpieces of two floral parks sprawled over a hectare of land a few meters from the Capitol building.

Sulu Provincial Treasurer Jesus Cabello, who was also the landscape artist, said the first fountain was named after former First Lady Imelda Marcos. The other park was named after the Lions's Club.

"The Imelda fountain is spurting three-meter high water that falls on its base. It's treated water, not potable," Cabello said.

The Lion's fountain sports two meters high and has the same landscape design.

Both parks are lined with shrubs—hydrangea, camellia and rhododendron—and garden flowers like violets, zenia, petunias, cactaceae, dahlias, bougainvillea, white tiger lilies, frangipani, sky vine and ixhoras.

Just like Luneta

The well-lit parks are mostly favored with white iron bars Corinthian benches on manicured lawns.

"So people can rest for a while and appreciate the different and colorful ornamental plants, climbs and trees that we have here," Cabello said.

There is no need to bring one's Walkman or, for the technologically advanced, their MP3 players.

"We have huge sound boxes at all corners playing music from 6 p.m. till midnight," Cabello added.

"It's like I'm in Lumera," Bonita said, adding that "they (government) should have done this before."

A place to care

Adelina Hassan, 44, a commercial photographer, said she had found a new place to earn a living.

"Now I earn about P60 to P100 per night," Hassan said.

Gov. Benjamin Loong said the province's rehabilitation was prompted by developments and packages like infrastructure and medical support.

"We also want to provide a different atmosphere that will make even ghosts feel that Sulu is not a dangerous place for people," said Loong.

Provincial Administrator Don Loong said the Capitol Fountain Park was dedicated "to the children of Sulu, so they could see a beautiful park that would inspire them."

"We want to change the mind-set of children from conflict to peace," he added.

Whenever there are available funds, he would give Cabello part of it "to improve not only the Capitol but as well as the entire Sulu," Loong said.

"This will serve as an encouragement of how beautiful our province is. Parents no longer bring their children to Manila or Zamboanga City to enjoy the sight of Luneta or other beautiful parks. Even your families can afford (coming here). Just a tricycle ride and they can see and appreciate what parks really look like," the governor said.

MAZON: Provocative release?

Shut up, pro-GMA allies slam Biazon

From page A1

son did was very unethical. He's already preempting the decision of the other members," he added.

He said Biazon was being "unreasonable" in claiming that the President benefited from massive cheating in the last elections without showing any proof to back it up.

"That is pure hallucination on the part of Biazon. He should not have uttered that statement when they do not have enough evidence to back up their claims," Pallen said.

Biazon should think first before opening his mouth because otherwise the House would become a laughingstock," he added.

Tapes not authenticated

Pichay said that Biazon could not claim he swears that the President was wiretapped because the "Hello Garci" tapes were never authenticated.

He also questioned Biazon's claim that his statements were the gist of the Senate committee's findings on the "Hello Garci" tapes. He said the committee's report will fail to be approved in plenary session.

The Senate is not the proper forum "to determine such complex, technical electronic evidence," Pichay said. Brigades said. It is the courts, the electoral tribunals or the Commission on Elections who can do that after reviewing the evidence," he said.

Brigades said the Senate could forward its findings to the Ombudsman or file cases "so that the defendants can defend themselves."

But the more important question is What legislation do they recommend from their last flagship journey? That's supposed to be the purpose of their exercise," he said.

Running out of ideas

Libanan and Javier said the attempt to resurrect the "Hello Garci" controversy showed that the opposition had run out of ideas to unite to throw against the administration.

"Politicians who sing but one song, that PGMA lied, cheated and stole in 2004 should learn a new tune because our people are sick and tired of their baseless and recycled charges," Libanan said.

Javier said the Senate should focus on proper and productive senate legislation rather than "resorting to politicking as its sole reason for existence."

"What matters to people are jobs and higher incomes to offset the rising oil prices, and not non-issues and non-problems, especially on issues that have already been settled, "he said.

"We urge senators to reassess their political interest and to minister to the needs of the people who elected them into office," he added.

3 bills

Yesterday, Biazon said his committee would report that hearing was convened during the 2004 polling but would leave it to the "proper agencies" what to do about the alleged electoral fraud and frost holidays.

Biazon cited at least three bills prohibiting the military from involvement in the elections, restricting the use of wiretapping equipment and restructuring of electoral boards to prevent electoral cheating would be filed as a result of his committee investigation.

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Abenojar can get no respect from RP climbers

By Mike Dizon

THE FILIPINO MOUNTAINEERING COMMUNITY remains skeptical Dale Abenojar made it to the top of Mt. Everest despite a statement from the acknowledged chronicler of climbs to the "roof of the world" that he did so on May 15.

"Maga?! (Really?) The truth will come out sometime," Rolando "Dubsy" Francisco, founding member of the University of the Philippines Mountaineers, told this broadsheet in a phone interview Wednesday.

Other mountaineers only had one thing to say: The burden of proof remained with Abenojar.

Art Valdez, an expedition leader of the First Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition (FPMEE), also said it was up to Abenojar to prove his claim.

"I really don't want to comment on that anymore. It's up to him to prove it," Valdez said in an interview also on Wednesday.

Bubby said that from what he knew, it "takes a while before [Elizabeth] Hawley is able to confirm if a climber reached the summit." Hawley chronicles climbs on Everest, having lived in Nepal for the past 40 years.

No extensive training

Primarily mountain climbers point to the fact that Abenojar had no alpine climbing experience and extensive training to be physically fit enough to reach the peak of Everest, which at 29,035 feet is the highest mountain in the world.

FPMEE's Jun Ortacion, the acknowledged first Filipino to Mt. Everest, reached the summit on May 17, followed by his teammate, Erwin "Pastor" Basca, on May 18.

On May 19, Noni Gaerlan, the nation's most accomplished mountaineer, reached the Everest summit, completing the Philippine triumvirate.

Another veteran mountaineer, who requested anonymity, said that while Hawley chronicles the climbs on Everest, her group is not a recognized certifying body for mountaineers.

"Her work there is simple to record but she's not a certifying agent," the mountaineer said.

The mountaineer said that aside from the summit photos, Abenojar should present photos of himself at the North Col's Yellow Band, the Second Step, where there is the 90-foot vertical wall, and the Third Step.

"Photos [of a climber] at these important parts of the North Col is the convincing proof that a climber reached the summit. He should have also a series of them. The burden of proof is always on the climber," the mountaineer said.

Bad reputation

The mountaineers added: "So (Abenojar) really has a bad reputation here, no one wants to believe him anymore."

A member of UPM, which expelled Abenojar after he brought a pot on a climb, said in a separate interview that "the problem with Dale is his reputation precedes him."

Skeptics in the mountaineering community said Abenojar had made a lot of false claims in commentaries.

Among these were that he had climbed every mountain in the Philippines, had ridden a motorbike to a mountaintop and climbed Mt. Halcon in Mindoro, one of the country's most difficult peaks.

The Halcon claim was found to be untrue by mountaineers in the area.

As for the motorbike, almost all the mountaineers interviewed by the Inquirer said Abenojar had porters bring up the bike's parts and he assembled them on the summit.

But Robin Bandoma, Abenojar's friend and mountain coordinator, said the mountain climber could have rented the set of the mountaineering components because "he is not a purist."

Bandoma said that while Abenojar may have committed transgressions in the past, he has changed with the help of his wife, Liza.

"Mey dagdaldalan siya noong araw. Eh mas somewhat tumatahimik na siya [ngayon]," Bandoma told the Inquirer in a previous interview. "But with the help of Liza, who is very spiritual, she told me to be more humble." With reports from Nikko Dizon

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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Wayward truck kills 3, hurts 12

Jeepload of students among victims in Antipolo mishap

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THREE PERSONS, INCLUDING A 10-year-old boy, were killed after a 10-wheel truck filled with gravel and rocks plowed into two passenger jeeps, two tricycles, a motorcycle and a water truck in Antipolo City yesterday morning.

Eleven students of the Mayamot Elementary School who were on their way home from classes, and a mother, were also hurt in the accident that caused a major traffic jam along the busy Marcos Highway, investigator PO1 Vic Madamba told the Inquirer.

The truck, loaded with rocks for excavation, first crashed into a passenger minibus after its brakes failed, causing it to spin around and slid into oncoming traffic on Marcos Highway, Madamba added.

Survivors

But the dump truck driver, Rolando Sotilla, and his helper survived the accident unhurt.

Sotilla had just come from Cogeo in Antipolo City to pick up his load of gravel and was on his way to Marikina, also in Antipolo to deliver the load at about 11:30 p.m. yesterday when he suddenly lost control of the vehicle along the Marcos Highway.

The truck first hit a passenger jeepney before it careened to the opposite lane, that time ramming into another jeepney full of students on their way home from school.

Driver Seisme Este, 50, and John Ken neth Thuty, 10, who were seated in front of the jeep, were seriously injured and later died at the Amang Rodriguez Medical Center, where the other pupils are still undergoing treatment.

The wayward truck also ran over a motorcycle also on the opposite lane, killing on the spot driver Fernando Bayon, 33.

The truck also hit a parked tricycle, another motorcycle parked on the sidewalk and a moving Isuzu elf Truck about to deliver water.

Manila Radio consultant reported the driver of the truck was detained for questioning. With a report from AP

A BRIDGE TOO CLOSE
A resident of the coastal area near Zapote, Las Piñas City gathers driftwood to build a bridge from their house on stilts to the shore.

2 top cops relieved for 'security lapses'

By DJ Yap

TWO RANKING OFFICIALS AT CAMP Bagong Diwa in Taguig City, headquarters of the National Capital Region Police Office, were relieved from their posts the other night for "security lapses" when an explosion rocked the facility on Tuesday.

The officials were identified as Supt. Ferdinand Lapuzo and Chief Inspector Pauline Logmanis, security and base police officers, said National Capital Region Police Office officer in charge Chief Supt. Joan Orais Jr. "They were relieved because they committed lapses in securing the camp," Orais told reporters yesterday.

On June 13, a blast triggered by a "low explosive" damaged a Special Weapons and Tactics van parked in the NCRPO compound. A man died in a series of blasts that happened in Metro Manila. The explosions, however, caused no injuries. Minor explosions also occurred at the Congolib Building in Makati City and the Philcoa area in Quezon City. A group calling itself "Young Revos at Kapatid" claimed responsibility for the bombings, but police said they were still verifying the group's existence.

Police also released an artist's sketch of a "possible suspect" in the Bagong Diwa blast based on a description provided by a utility worker who saw the man walk away from the van after the blast.

SENIOR Supt. Felipe Rojas holds an artist's sketch of the SWAT van bombing suspect.

Policemen raid stalls selling used mobile phones in Marikina

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SELLING SECOND HAND MARU? Better get a permit from the police first.

Otherwise, vendors and mall owners face arrest according to the law, Marikina City Police chief Senior Supt. Manuel Rosal has told the business community.

"Those selling second-hand products should not only have proper documents. The vendors should also secure permits from the police," Rosal said.

He made the warning during a surprise inspection of a mall in the city yesterday noon. The National Capital Region Police Office assisted operatives of the National Telecommunications Commission in checking out stalls selling mobile phones inside the Riverbanks Mall.

In the course of their visit, the team found out that many stalls did not have the required permit from the NTC to sell mobile phones.

They also confiscated several used phones after the mall owners failed to show proper documents during the on-the-spot inspection.

"The operation was meant to curb the rampant selling of stolen phones," Casilan said.

WORTHY CAUSE
Northern Police District director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bacnol and his men with Maria Elza (center), widow of photo journalist Alberto Orosina, and the Orosina children after the signing of a memorandum ensuring the children of educational support from the PNP.

5 suspected car thieves killed in QC shootout

By DJ Yap

FIVE SUSPECTED CAR THIEVES WERE shot to dead in gunpoint were killed in an alleged shootout with Quezon City policemen the other night. Four of the suspects died on the spot after trading gunshots with agents of the Quezon City Police District Intelligence and Investigation Division (DIID). A fifth suspect, who was rushed to the hospital after the gunfight, died while undergoing treatment. All five remained unidentified yesterday, but were believed to be members of a notorious gang of taxi robbers.

Police said the group robbed taxi driver Rene Dalmacio at about 9 p.m. and forcibly took his cab along the Mrs Road in Pinahongan City. The victim reported the incident to the police who immediately sought sight of the taxi and called it, until it reached Barangay Luping Hondo, where they lost their quarry.

Policemen saw the taxi at a dimly-lit parking area at the corner of Tomas Morato Avenue and Kamuning Road, and identified themselves. The suspects suddenly opened fire at the police car, resulting in a brief exchange of gunfire, investigators said.

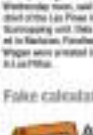
MetroBriefs

End of the line

ICAD suspected enemy-in-fatcas believed to be operating in the southern part of Metro Manila fell into the hands of the police on Wednesday night in Las Piñas City. Police identified the suspects as Thomas Lopez, Ahmel Magan, Eric dela Cruz and Antonio Ruan, alleged members of a gang called the "Shamrock Twist." The four were nabbed after Alex Elson spotted for the police that his car was now speeding off on his Honda motorcycle on Wednesday noon, said Senior Insp. Sonny Garon, chief of the Las Piñas Intelligence division and carjacking unit. Dela Cruz and Ruan were arrested in Barangay Pamplona Dos in Las Piñas.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Fake calculators seized



CLOSE to P4 million worth of counterfeit Casio calculators were confiscated during a raid conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on a business establishment in Caloocan, Manila last week. NBI Acting Director Nestor Mantaring identified the business establishment as G.D. Arnoco Enterprises, with stalls located at Manila City Plaza on Carmelo Street and CSB Building on Evangelista Street. Owners Rose Tan, Jenny Yao and Ceferino Ramos were facing trademark infringement charges, said NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division chief Jose Javier Sia. Accompanying the IPRD report, the E.B Antonio and Associates law office, in behalf of Casio Computer Co. Ltd. had earlier complained about the unauthorized sale of fake Casio electronic calculators in the city. Surveillance operations conducted by the NBI traced the sources of the counterfeit products to the suspects' stores. Ben-Hur I. Abarentos

Reyzen C. Ortiz

NCWP 60th anniversary

The National Council of Women of the Philippines, headed by Dr. Amelina Bonifacio, will hold a Central Council meeting on the occasion of its 60th anniversary with the theme "NCWP's Legacy: Women's Resiliency in the Global Milieu" tomorrow, 8:30 a.m. at the Philippine Women's University, Taft Avenue, Manila. Among the guests are Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Australian Ambassador Tim Fischer and Dr. Helena Benitez. NCWP's past president and PWU chairperson, highlights of the organization's achievements, a solemn candlelight ceremony, a poetry reading, a song rendition on children's rights, awards ceremony and the presentation of the Francisca Tirona Benitez Diamond Awards to NCWP's past presidents.

Back to work for suspended principals

By Alexan Papa

SEVEN HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS in Taguig City who were suspended earlier were told to return to work yesterday by the Department of Education (DepEd).

DepEd Undersecretary for Legal and Legislative Affairs Franklin Fonga told the bureau in that the suspension of the principals by Taguig Division Officer in Charge Dr. Evelyn Villoria last Tuesday was "void."

Suspended were Dr. Eleonor Almeda of the Taguig National High School, Bella Fernandez of the Bagumbayan National High School, Noemi Bade of the Taguig Science High School, Ginnge Tiona of the New Cuyonon Science and Technical High School, Gaia de la Cruz of the Tipas National High School, and two other unidentified principals.

"The orders of Dr. Villoria were recalled and rescinded for being invalid. All of the principals can go back to their jobs," Fonga said. He added that Villoria did not have any basis for suspending the principals.

No power

"She has no power to suspend the principals. According to the Magna Carta for Teachers, a suspension can only be issued by the regional director or the secretary of education," Fonga said.

"But even then, a suspension is issued only when there is a formal charge against the teacher," he added.

No reason was given by Villoria for the principals' suspension, according to the DepEd official.

"The reason for the suspension was not stated. We had been trying to get in touch with Dr. Villoria to ask for an explanation. But we have not been able to reach her," he said.

Appointments

Fonga added that the DepEd had appointed Dr. Amancio Villanueva as Taguig division superintendent. Villanueva was the former Caloocan assistant division superintendent. Villoria, on the other hand, stays as Taguig assistant division chief.

Classes at the Taguig National High School were suspended earlier after some 300 teachers, students and some parents staged a rally calling for the ouster of Almeda on charges of corruption.

Staying put

Almeda had already been informed of her reassignment to another school. But she had insisted she was staying put at her post.

Almeda had dismissed the allegations as "baseless" and "politically motivated," adding that Taguig Mayor Freddie Tinga could have had a hand in demands for her ouster.

This, however, was denied by Ana Santos, Taguig public information officer head.

"How could that be when the protesters were teachers and parents airing their grievances," she said.

CIA's Somalia warlords ousted from last bastion

JOWHAR, SOMALIA—FOR JUNE Islamic militia in Somalia Wednesday captured the last strongholds of a US-backed warlord alliance and vowed to establish Sharia courts, cementing a victory after more than four months of fighting, residents said.

Combining their sheer numbers, volume of heavily armed militias, dissidents gunships equipped pick-up trucks—known as "technicals"—captured the towns of Jowhar, about 90 km north of capital Mogadishu, and Mahaddai Imo.

The Islamic militia captured the Mogadishu enclave this month.

Islamic courts chief Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed immediately imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew in Jowhar and told his fighters to show dead anybody found looting.

"We did not come here to carry money or claim power, but to make you safe and secure," he told a crowd of local residents as hundreds more Islamic fighters chanted "Allah Akbar"—"God is Great"—continued to enter town.

Doctors at local hospitals in both towns said eight people had been killed and around 20 wounded in the battles, with residents saying the toll was lower than previously feared since civilians had had time to take cover.

"We have captured Jowhar and we are now planning to establish a new administration and establish Sharia courts as soon as possible," said Sheikh Hassan Dir, one of the Islamic militia commanders.

In addition, the Islamists seized two top alliance commanders, Hassan Mataan and Osman Dheere, whom were later questioned.

By the time the cache took effect, thousands of residents were fleeing.

Residents said the Islamists, who now control a large part of Mogadishu, had been well-prepared to seize Jowhar from warlord Mohammed Dheere, a member of the US-backed Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT).

Dheere was reportedly in Ethiopia where Islamic militants entered Jowhar, host to a United Nations office and other international aid agencies resulting in the shuttered African nations.

Most international staff were evacuated last week.

Meanwhile, the Somali transitional parliament—sitting in the regional border town—approved the deployment of peacekeepers, deepening rifts with the courts, whose fighters have vowed to kill foreign troops entering Somalia.

Several warlords had already fled Tuesday night ahead of the fighting, Mohamed Mirah Qanyare and Issa Nimo Ilka—who were pushed out of the capital early this month—and a Sheikh-name Ayad Sheikh, Abdi Nasr Said, left Jowhar and headed further north to Qeryaan's hometown in the central Somali region of Galgadud. AFP

MEMBERS of a Somali Islamic Court militia cradle their weapons in the Jowhar area after clashes with a coalition of warlords reported to be supporting the CIA June 14.

NO PEACE PIPE SMOKER, THIS 'CHE'

This 1958 photo shows dogmatic hero revolutionary figure Ernesto "Che" Guevara in Cuba Las Villas as he and Fidel Castro prepared for the revolution that toppled Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. June 14 marks the 78th anniversary of Guevara's birth. AFP

Multiple large-scale massacres in Darfur, war crimes court finds

UNITED NATIONS—THE CHIEF prosecutor of the International Criminal Court said Wednesday his office had documented multiple large-scale massacres and hundreds of rape cases in Sudan's war-torn Darfur region.

In a report to the UN Security Council, Luis Moreno-Ocampo said the office had documented "thousands of alleged direct killings of civilians by parties to the conflict," including "a significant number of large-scale massacres, with hundreds of victims [each] incident."

Ocampo told the council that his office was investigating allegations that some of the groups implicated in the Darfur crimes "did so with specific genocidal intent."

He said identifying those with the greatest responsibility for the most serious crimes in Darfur was a key challenge for his probe but said he would not draw any conclusions pending the completion of a "full and impartial investigation."

He said the ICC would send the "full support of the Security Council and the unlimited cooperation of the international community in particular the government of Sudan."

Ocampo said interviews of victims and witnesses reported that rape—perceived to be from the Fur, Masalit and Saghawa ethnic groups were "deliberately targeted."

Evidence cited sometimes documents that "the perpetrators made statements reinforcing the targeted nature of the attacks, such as 'we will kill all the blacks' and 'we will drive you out of this land'."

The report also cited a "significant amount of information indicating that thousands of civilians have fled since 2003" as a result of lack of shelter and basic necessities for survival after their homes and food stocks were destroyed and their property looted.

Ocampo's office also recorded "hundreds of alleged cases of rape," which the report said was indicative of an endemic practice among some groups involved in the conflict.

It highlighted a "widespread pattern of displacement of civilians, with severe intensity of some two million displaced persons and refugees from Darfur."

"Destruction of property and looting is a prevalent feature of the crimes in Darfur, with reports of destruction and looting in up to 2,000 villages throughout the three Darfur states," it said.

The study covering the October 2003-May 2006 period, also referred to continued reports of direct attacks on humanitarian workers and peacekeepers, including the killing of African Union peacekeepers in 2005 and 2006.

"These attacks are not only grave examples of the potential for serious crimes, they have an impact on the delivery of vital services that exacerbates the suffering of the most vulnerable groups in Darfur," it said.

Meanwhile, Sudan's UN envoy Omar Khalil said his government had set up a special criminal court to deal with the Darfur crimes.

But New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) said it was aware of only 12 cases that had been brought before that special court to date.

"The cases have involved low-ranking individuals accused of relatively minor offenses. No senior commanders or superiors have been charged for their part in the atrocities," HRW said. AFP

10 dead in Afghan bomb attack on workers

KHOSHAM, AFGHANISTAN—A powerful bomb tore apart a minibus carrying Afghan laborers to a US military base in on Thursday, killing about 16 amid growing violence before Nato takes over from US troops in the volatile south.

Three shops were destroyed and ruined metal and a large pool of blood covered the street at the scene of the attack which cemented charing rush hour in the southern city of Kandahar, the heartland of the Taliban.

It was the latest incident in the worst wave of violence since US-led forces toppled the Taliban in in 2001.

"It was a big explosion. We don't know if the explosives were in the minibus or not," said a policeman at the scene, Rais Mohammad. "We have seen more than 10 dead people with legs and hands blown off being brought out of the bus."

Kandahar police chief Azizullah Wardak said the blast was caused by explosives apparently hidden in the bus.

He said he knew of at least seven dead.

The bomb went off some after the bus made a regular stop to buy bread at a bakery before heading to Kandahar airport where US and international forces have a base, and Sabza Kamarddak.

Three shops were destroyed. Nervous shopkeepers cleared rubble from the street where a pool of blood and pieces of flesh lay.

Azizullah said the blast was the work of "Afghanistan's enemies," a term officials use to refer to the Taliban and their al-Qaeda allies.

The Taliban claimed responsibility.

"It is our success, it shows that we have access to even highly guarded government places and we can do whatever we want," a Taliban commander, Mullah Hayat Khan, told Reuters. Reuters

Unchecked trade in ammunition fueling conflicts

LONDON—THE UNCHECKED trade in ammunition is fueling conflicts around the world, including in Iraq and Afghanistan, Oxfam International said Thursday.

"Figures show that export data exist for only 15 percent of the 10 to 14 billion bullets manufactured every year, leaving up to 10 billion rounds for which no reliable data exist," the British-based development charity said.

In report showed that several big ammunition producers—including China, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Bulgaria, Romania and Israel—provide no data at all on their ammunition exports, apart from shotgun cartridges.

The report, "Ammunition: The Fuel of Conflict," was published ahead of the UN conference on the small arms trade which begins in New York on June 26.

Oxfam director Barbara Stocking said in a statement that during the conference, "governments must agree new global principles to govern both the small arms and the ammunition trade."

The report argues that if bullet casings—which are often left at the scene of crimes and manufactured properly marked, it would be far more likely that human rights abusers and criminals would be brought to justice.

Currently, markings only enable the manufacturer to be identified.

Oxfam's report outlined how illicit ammunition has flooded into war-torn countries like Iraq and Afghanistan as well as Somalia, Sierra Leone and Liberia in the last five years.

It said at least 70 countries manufacture ammunition, and the number is growing. Kenya and Turkey have both become producers in the last 10 years.

"Our research shows that new ammunition is widely available on Baghdad's black market," Stocking said.

"There are two likely explanations for this: either it was smuggled in from neighboring countries or it has leaked from coalition or Iraqi-owned supplies," she said. AFP

Bush relieved top aide Rove is cleared

WASHINGTON — PRESIDENT Bush said on Wednesday that he "took a sigh of relief" when federal prosecutors decided this week not to indict Karl Rove, his top political adviser, in the CIA leak case.

But Bush, speaking with reporters in the Rose Garden, still faced tough questions about the investigation. One journalist asked if the president believed that Rove eased any speculation by describing "his thinking" statements about his role to the media. Another asked, "Do you have any words to do to rebuild credibility that might have been lost?"

Bush dodged the questions.

Certainly the decision by the lead prosecutor, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, not to indict Rove is a major boost for the administration, cutting off an avenue of investigation that had come close to the Oval Office. But questions remain about how misinformation from a deputy chief of staff, who once had to wear rule in administration efforts to rebut a war critic—even with his own White House colleagues.

And there is still a trial looming for Vice President Dick Cheney's former chief of staff, I. Lewis Libby Jr., who is accused of lying to federal investigators who were trying to find out whether the White House intentionally disclosed the name of a CIA operative, Valerie Wilson, in an effort to undermine a war critic, her husband, former ambassador Joseph C. Wilson. AP

Chinese laments lost 'kingdom of bicycles'

BEIJING—A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF Beijing has lashed out at the growing, unruly procession of the car and is urging China to retain its former title as the "kingdom of bicycles," state media said Thursday.

"The explosive growth of motor vehicles has caused severe traffic jams in major Chinese cities and is posing a grave challenge to the country's energy security and urban development," Xinhua news agency quoted Vice Minister of Construction Qiu Baoxing as saying.

Qiu backed out at municipal authorities that making it harder for cyclists to ride on city streets and demanded a halt to the transformation of biking lanes into roads for cars, the report said.

"While some Chinese cities are turning back on bicycle lanes to create more room for cars, some Western cities are beginning to build more cycling paths," he said in a Wednesday conference on city planning and development.

"The Ministry of Construction is firmly opposed to the elimination of bicycle lanes and has ordered cities to restore them."

The number of motor vehicles in China's roads exceeded 20 million between 1978 and 2004 and could increase five-fold again by 2020, Qiu said.

In 2006 there were 17 million motor vehicles in the country and that number could reach 130 million in 15 years, he said.

China had up to 500 million cyclists on the roads in the early 1980s, a phenomenon that earned the title and nickname of China being called the "kingdom of bicycles," he said.

But the number of cyclists has fallen as rapidly as private automobile had risen, Qiu said. AFP

HOW TO clear Yangtze—About 3,000 cubic meters of water will gush out of the Xiaolangdi reservoir per second in the next 13-20 days as work the sands in the Yellow River into the sea.

SRI LANKA ATTACK

Land mine blast kills 64 in Sri Lanka

Map of Sri Lanka locating mine-attack site on Thursday

COLOMBO—A LAND MINE ripped through a bus Thursday, killing 64 passengers and injuring 78 in the deadliest attack since a truce in Sri Lanka more a 2002 truce and sparking army shelling of Tamil rebel positions.

The military launched long-range artillery bombings after blaming the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the carnage in an ethnic Sinhalese district in the island's North-Central province.

The rebels denied involvement in the blast.

The spiraling violence reversed fears that the island is dealing back to a full-scale war between Sri Lanka's military and rebels. Efforts by Norway last week failed to arrange a face-to-face meeting between Colombo and the LTTE.

Foreign Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, the government's spokesperson on defense-related issues, said at least 58 people including two Buddhist monks were killed while another 41 were in critical condition.

Hospital sources said six more people had died in hospital, raising to 64 the total number of dead.

The bus packed with villagers was heading to Kebiggollawa town when it was torn apart by the powerful blast.

Casualties were high as it was surrounded with people moved, lying in a weekly market, Rambukwella said.

"This is a most barbaric terrorist act of the Tigers," he said, accusing the LTTE of carrying out the attack.

The September 2001 truce was declared by the LTTE.

Military spokesperson Prasad Samarasinghe said it was the worst attack against civilians since a February 2002 truce went into effect.

"We have no doubt that the attack is the work of the LTTE," he said. "No one else would do a thing like this."

He said the ban was hit by a Claymore mine, or a side charge, which overturned the vehicle and sent it crashing down the road for about 25 meters. Women and children were among the victims.

The second took place in the district of Amparai hospital, 200 km south of Colombo.

Retaliatory shelling targeted rebel positions at Mutugal in the eastern district of Trincomalee, military officials said, adding that they did not have details of any casualties or damage.

The military carried out air strikes on positions in the same area in April after a suicide bomber blew up an army headquarters in Colombo.

A spate of recent bomb attacks have targeted security forces as well as civilians and have been officially blamed on Tamil Tiger guerrillas waging a campaign for independence.

Despite the truce, a surge in violence has left at least 7,215 people since December, according to official figures.

The land mine exploded a day after the Tamil Tigers said they had clashed with Sri Lankan soldiers who were allegedly laying mines deep within rebel-held territory but they denied responsibility for the attack.

It follows the return to the island on Wednesday of leaders of the LTTE after planned talks in Oslo with Sri Lankan government officials failed to take place.

The rebels refused to sit in the talks after the Sri Lankan delegation, for whom had been billed as two days of talks to discuss ways of ensuring the safety of Scandinavian monitors on the truce.

The government and the Tigers have accused each other of stepping up attacks despite the Tokyo-brokered truce that was the centerpiece of internationally backed peace efforts in the island.

Peace hopes all but vanished after Norway failed to bring the opposing parties to the table for two days of talks on June 8 and 9.

Diplomatic sources say Norway is now looking for an exit after spending six years attempting to broker peace in the island, where more than 65,000 people have been killed in three decades of fighting. AFP

PM Olmert says West Bank plan unstoppable

PARIS—PRIME MINISTER EHUD Olmert said on Wednesday his plans to set Israel's borders unilaterally were irreversible, but he still hoped to negotiate a deal with the Palestinians.

Olmert is visiting France and Britain to promote his "realignment plan," under which dozens of Israeli settlements in the West Bank would be removed and others annexed behind a fortified border an Israel the Palestinians say is theirs.

"The realignment plan is unstoppable. It is unpreventable. It will be implemented," Olmert told reporters after his first meeting with French President Jacques Chirac.

"I hope it can be carried out within the framework of talks, but it will be carried out with or without talks," he said of the plan, which would see Israel take chunks of land where Palestinians want a state.

Britain and France have stressed the need for a negotiated deal rather than a unilateral move and French officials quoted Chirac as telling Olmert that this was "an absolute priority."

However, Olmert told reporters he believed his plan was gaining credence. "Recognition of the unpreventability of the realignment plan has been enhanced."

The Europeans are among the patrons of a peace "road map" and in the past have opposed Israeli unilateralism. Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas will deputize Olmert's plan will deprive them of viable statehood in the West Bank-Israel split Gaza last year.

Olmert said negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian authority were "central" to his agenda and he told French television he expected to meet Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas "at the end of June or the beginning of July."

"I want to meet Abu Mazen (Abbas), I really believe he does not want terrorism ... I am ready to take enormous risks to make peace with Abu Mazen," he told the TV1 channel.

However, he ruled out formal negotiations until the new Palestinian government under Hamas (Islamist) renounced violence, accepted past peace accords, and recognized Israel.

An Israeli official quoted Chirac as telling Olmert: "These conditions are not subject to negotiation and no one should have any doubt about this."

Barnier has so far rejected the role of peacemaker.

As top European Union powers, Britain and France have played supporting roles in navigating a tattered "road map" to ending a more than 5-year-old Palestinian revolt. They have also led Western bids to curb Iran's atomic ambitions through diplomacy.

Olmert was quoted as saying that his stance on Iran "was absolutely identical to the president's (Chirac's) position." Reuters

A FIRE THAN CAN BE CALLED GOOD
Ayma are ablaze during a weapon destruction ceremony at a stadium in Kampong Thom, a province 160 km north of Phnom Penh, June 15. The Cambodian government regularly destroys illegal weapons.

E. Timor probe may reach to PM

DILI—A UNITED NATIONS backed criminal probe into violence that killed at least 11 in East Timor may reach all the way to Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, one of the investigation team said Thursday.

A UN team of special prosecutors has begun working with Dili's independent prosecutor-general Longuinhos Monteiro on the probe, which one member said would look into several separate incidents along with allegations of gang violence linked to Alkatiri.

"We have to investigate deeply and find out who are those exactly involved in the violence. No one will be spared," one of the prosecutors, Australian Paul Hill, told AFP when asked if allegations against Alkatiri would be examined.

"We are now discussing with the Montero what and how many cases we have and then we can commence the investigations," he said.

The team of prosecutors was announced Tuesday in Dili by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's representative to East Timor Sukehiro Hasegawa.

Findings of the group are to be forwarded to an independent inquiry commission ordered by Annan.

Hasegawa has said that the decision whether to investigate the allegations against Alkatiri rested with East Timor's chief prosecutor Monteiro.

"I am confident that the justice system will prevail, because with our justice, the people's confidence will not be organized," he said.

A senior aide to Alkatiri on Thursday reiterated that the prime minister was open "to any impartial investigation. He has nothing to hide."

"He has said before that he is not guilty of these accusations," the aide said. AFP

$1B lost to phony claims for 'Katrina,' 'Rita' losses

WASHINGTON—BOOGIE 16 percent of aid payments for victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita were based on bogus claims or spent on questionable items like diamond rings and sex videos, a government watchdog agency told Congress on Wednesday.

About $1 billion was lost to fraudulent and improper claims, Government Accountability Office investigators told a House of Representatives Homeland Security subcommittee.

Money went to people who did not live in damaged property, and false property addresses or made duplicate claims, they said in a report to the panel. The estimate is based on an examination of 267 of the 2.6 million emergency aid claims totaling more than $6 billion.

"We believe our estimate understates the magnitude of the problem because it includes only issues related to the application process," GAO investigator Gregory Kutz said in testimony to the committee.

The FEMA recovery was intended to help hurricane victims pay for food, clothes, housing and other essentials. But some recipients used it to make questionable purchases such as a diamond ring and other jewelry worth $3,700 at a shop in Arlington, Texas, the GAO said.

Another recipient bought a one-week expedition vacation for $2,200, the GAO said. Other questionable purchases included a $200 bottle of Dom Perignon champagne at a shooters restaurant in San Antonio, Texas, and $100 for girls from 9Mil sex emporium, the report said.

FEMA also paid millions to hundreds of state and federal prisoners, Kutz said. Reuters

Islamic extremists misguided, says Bashir

SOLO, INDONESIA—A FIERY Islamic cleric who served more for his role in the 2002 Bali bombings has reportedly called Islamic militants "misguided" holy warriors, as Australia's prime minister called on Thursday for him to be monitored.

Abu Bakar Bashir returned to the Muslim boarding school he founded in Central Java's Solo last Wednesday after he was released from his maximum security prison in Jakarta at the end of a nearly 26-month term.

Speaking to reporters amid a throng of cheering supporters who greeted him at the Al-Mukmin school, Bashir said alleged terrorist chief Noordin Mohammad Top and his followers should revise their violent methods.

"I would say that they are misguided mujahideen. Holy warriors). Fighting using bombs or weapons in a peaceful state is forbidden," Bashir said according to the Christian Science Monitor agency.

"So I hope they will review their methods. Hopefully there will not be any more violences in the future. All that time they have chosen the wrong way," the alleged leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) regional movement group said.

JI has been blamed for a string of deadly blasts in Indonesia.

However, the cleric reportedly said the militants deserved to be called holy warriors because their intention was to defend Islam. AFP

Iraq conflict fuels rise in number of global refugees to 12M

ANTI-WAR activist Angela Kelly rests her hand on a flag-draped coffin representing the 2,300 US soldiers who have died in Iraq during a protest in front of the White House June 14.

WASHINGTON—THE GLOBAL refugee population has begun to rise for the first time in four years, largely due to instability in Iraq, a UN group said in a survey, which says refugee protection deteriorating by all measures.

The number of refugees and asylum seekers increased to 12 million in 2005 from 11.3 million a year earlier, according to "World Refugee Survey 2006" of the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), a non-profit group tracking the problem worldwide.

The survey counted 644,500 more Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Syria in 2005 and indicated a "many significant outflow" in the history.

"The deteriorating situation in Iraq has led to the refugee problem some predicted at the onset of the war, which has only worsened since," the USCRI said.

Over 40 percent of Iraqi professionals have fled the country—a standard notion since the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, it said.

Syria now hosts 331,000 Iraqi refugees and has the largest population of Iraqi Shiite Muslims outside Iraq, while Jordan hosts 450,000 Iraqi refugees, many of whom are Christian minorities, according to the report.

It said that the Middle East and Africa continued to host the largest number of refugees, and that eight million or two-thirds of the world's refugees remained "warehoused" or deprived of basic human rights as enshrined in the UN Refugee Convention for five years or more.

Neighbor Jordan and Syria, said the report, recognized the UN's call for temporary protection of refugees and "both refuse entry to many new arrivals.

"We are concerned that protection for Iraqis is deteriorating," USCRI President Lavinia Limon said.

"Syria has begun to require residency authorization so many refugees are forced to live underground. Jordan is not granting refugee status to Iraqis and refusing entry to many," Limon said.

USCRI anticipates ever "a more significant outflow" of Iraqi refugees in the near future, based on Baghdad's issuance of two million passports in the last 8 months.

According to the survey, the global refugee population began to fall after hitting 14.9 million in 2001 but showed an upward again last year.

USCRI's 12 million global refugee figure for 2005 are far higher than the 8.4 million cited by the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) last week.

The UNHCR had said that the number of refugees who fled their homeland dropped to its lowest level in almost three decades last year, adding however that there was an alarming rise in the total displaced within their own countries. AFP

The WORLD

Editor Lourdes B. Bueno

Iran quietly told of penalties in deal

PARIS—WHEN AN INCENTIVES PACKAGE BY SIX NATIONS to encourage Iran to curb its nuclear program was presented in writing in Tehran last week, it contained a long list of potential punishments should Iran reject it, according to senior officials familiar with the package.

Instead, it was left to Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, to deliver news about the stick...orally orally.

In a one-on-one meeting without aides, Solana told Ali Larijani, the chief Iranian negotiator, that there would be "serious consequences" against Iran in the UN Security Council if Iran did not suspend key nuclear activities and enhance the talks, the officials added.

The decision to focus on the benefits for Iran and to leave no paper trail about possible penalties reflects a new international negotiating strategy toward Iran.

"In the past, we were told we didn't have enough respect" for the Iranians, one senior official said. "Maybe we're learning, and this time our approach was different, more respectful."

The strategy also reflects the recent shift in the policy of the Bush administration. It follows a decision last month by the administration to sit at the same negotiating table with Iran—if Iran fully suspended its uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities.

Ruhi had rejected a previous proposal presented by France, Britain and Germany. This time, the United States, Russia and China are full partners in the negotiations, with all six nations apparently determined to give Iran a package so generous that it would have no reason to say no.

The disclosure that the formal written proposal omitted sanctions came to light after extracts were published Wednesday by Agence France-Presse. The text was read to The New York Times by an official.

One key goal of the offer, according to the text, is "to develop relations and cooperation with Iran based on mutual respect," the first time the Bush administration has indicated that it is prepared to deal with Iran on such a positive way.

The proposal includes such technical incentives as international commitments to support joint projects with Tehran for building new light water reactors to make electricity.

The offer lays out two ways that Tehran could reach success. The first alternative would have Iran participate in an "international facility" in Russia that would enrich uranium, an idea that Tehran has consistently rejected. The second would have Iran draw on a commercial supply of nuclear fuel that the International Atomic Energy Agency would supervise and that would act as a "buffer stock" lasting for up to five years. AST

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A BABY flamingo hatched at the Columbus Zoo, near Powell, Ohio, is guided back to its nest by its parents June 14. The birds live to be about 40 years old. —

Death of girl takes Indonesia bird flu toll to 38

JAKARTA, INDONESIA—A 7-YEAR-OLD GIRL who died in Indonesia earlier this month was suffering from bird flu, international tests have confirmed, bringing the country's death toll from the virus to at least 38.

The girl's brother also died showing symptoms of the virus, but was buried before tests were taken, the health ministry said earlier this month.

Wyanto Bandan, a senior health ministry official, said Thursday tests from Hong Kong had confirmed the girl was positive for the deadly H5N1 strain of the virus.

Indonesia leads only Vietnam, where 42 people have died, in human bird flu deaths and the H5N1 virus is considered endemic in poultry in most provinces across the sprawling archipelago.

Health officials have expressed concern over the possible transmission of among humans after several members of the same family contracted the illness in Sumatra.

The World Bank this week said Indonesia's efforts to stop H5N1 spread are underfunded.

Indonesia has said it will need US$900 million (over P47.16 million) over the next three years to fight the virus, but has only budgeted US$50 million (some$2 million) for 2006.

Bird flu has killed at least 128 people worldwide since it started ravaging Asian poultry farms in late 2003.

So far most human cases have been linked to contact with infected birds, but experts fear the virus could mutate into a form more easily transmissible among humans, potentially sparking a pandemic that could kill millions worldwide. AP

SPORTS
Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Harbour forces deciding Game 5

By Jaccelon W. Puyo

HARBOUR CENTRE IS NOT all LA Tenorio and Joseph Yeo, after all.

With backup playmaker Chito Lorette pumping in 20 points, the Pertamina-sponsored Fuyong Elite Sparks, 73-55, yesterday evening forced a deciding Game 5 in the PBL Unity Cup Finals at the Ultimate Sports Center in Pandacan.

Lorette teamed up with the Dormitories' substitutes to give the home a 17-point lead at the half, 38-21, then scored nine points in a critical stretch in the final period that moved his team beyond recall, 60-50.

"Our defense was great," said Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent. "We started well and ended well. Whatever we did right today, we have to do again in Game 5."

The decider is set at 5 p.m. tomorrow, also at the Ultimate Sports Center.

Iconic-minded superb in the series, delivering nine of his 16 markers in the second half, said while "Jon admitted his shooting was off, the Harbour ace still proved a factor with eight rebounds, four assists and two steals.

The Pertamyenes shook the bottle inside of the court that they hardly felt the impact of Joe Devance's biggest game in the series. Devance, the Most Valuable Player of the conference, finally answered himself with 16 points and 13 rebounds.

The Sparks also missed starting forward Arnesto Mata, who sprained his wrist in Game 2.

In Fuy Devance, the Sparks rallied from 43-25 to move within 48-40 on a 3P Cantu shot. But Topeng Cruz couldn't get any closer than that.

From a 58-48 lead, the Pertamyenes sizzled on 11-2 rally with Lorette scoring six points for a 19-point bubble, 69-50, with only 2:28 left.

With the Harbour Centre stars on the bench, the Pertamyenes' second unit led by Lorette outscored the Sparks, 13-4, at the start of the second quarter to grab a 51-15 lead.

Pertamyenes
MERQUERENTE 14 — Lorette 20, Tenorio 14, Arroyo 8, Reyes 7, Dela E. Bautista 6, Arana 2, Dela G. Sy 2, Yeo 1, Cuyong 0.

TOTOS' OTZ 55 — Devance 16, Oliver 9, Avanzado 8, Bautista 6, Fano 5, Figueroa 5, Dela E. Bautista 2, Enriquez 2, Caramat 2, Lanting 2, Dela G. Catalbas 0

Quarter: 15-7; 38-21; 58-48; 73-55

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SMART

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Bulls, Kings KO showdown today

WITH THEIR SEASON ON THE LINE, Red Bull and Barangay Sandoz despite the last quarterfinal slot today in the Great Metrodeal Stanley-Poly Philippine Cup at the Fausto Gymnasium in Antipolo.

The Bulls forged a deciding game in the best-of-three series after walloping the defending champion Kings in Wednesday.

Red Bull will go into the 7 p.m. game with an edge in manpower despite losing point guard Cedric Cua to a bumper rolling suspending technical fouls.

Cua was automatically dropped a one-game suspension for throwing something which relieve Lastin "Boy" Uttal said was obscene.

And Red Bust Gerebos in their last 80 games—Game 7 of the Finals Cup actually ends this game.

"My feeling is that experience and bench depth will be our advantage going into Game 3," Red Bull coach Ying Dalusa had said after the 118-87 Game 4 victory. "But this is the time when Sandoz is most dangerous."

Sandoz has been coming up with an

GAME TODAY | Fausto Center
7 p.m. — Red Bull vs Barangay Sandoz

amazing performances one after the other, getting this far despite shakeup among key players injured by injuries to key personnel.

And On the Kings will come into the game as strangers to pressure. They also won a do-or-die game close to two weeks back—against Red3, another complete team—to make this round.

That's why coach Boni battling them physically, the Game 4 win, where the Bulls set season highs in quarter scoring, halftime total and game total, could have deflated the Kings' collective cagey instinct for tonight.

So dominant were the Bulls on Wednesday that their 28 points in the first period and their 68 halftime points were the most by any team that year. They completed their mastery of the Kings by leading by as many as 35 points at one stage and by not allowing Sandoz to collect the pay-down line. All in the entire second half.

Worth watching are the matchups between Jim Alatti and Jimmy Villanueva in the paint, Mark Caguioa and Cyrus Baguio in the off-guard spot and Topex Robinson and Egay Erbanez in the backcourt.

But just like in Game 4, the Bulls' crowd are in unanimously with their hearts and the Kings' prolific players and around try to limit those who could unexpectedly contribute.

"We don't want to limit too much so as their Monti or Caguioa," said Villanueva. "We'll just run our system and try to quicken the pace. Hope we could control our tempo with the same intensity as Friday (today)."

HARBOUR Centre top scorer Chico Lanete (right) maneuvers off Yancy Ortiz's (P Alcantara in yesterday's PBL Finals match at the Ortigas Gym. Story on A11. [illegible]

300 game for Poblete in Boysen Int'l Open

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FORMER NATIONAL TEAM MAINSTAY RICHIE Poblete rolled a perfect game—the 13th in his career—as he gained on the leaders in the inaugural Open Masters Wednesday night in the 56th PBC-Boysen International Open Singles Bowling Championships at the Greenhills.

The 32-year-old Poblete, who comes from a family of bowlers, rolled the 300 in the second game en route to a 6-bar game series of 922, which was a pin behind JC Tapao among the Filipinos in the field. He stood sixth overall in the Masters lineup behind four Koreans and Tapao.

Poblete is the youngest of eight siblings of ex-cyclist Eduardo Poblete, a former Philippine Bowling Congress president, and current Philippine Women's Bowling Association head Magda Poblete. His brothers, former PBC Team members Charlie and Eddy have also scored perfect games.

"The conditions just felt inspired," said Poblete, who left the national team a few years ago and now works with the magazine distributor's Opus.

Poblete said he felt very good as he continued to hone good form after a 224 first game.

He rolled 269 and 230 after his perfect game that gave him a share of the P30,000 prize that will be divided among the nine 300 earners.

The perfect games include former World Cup champion CJ Ramos and Southeast Asian Games women's Masters gold winner Lizy Chanata.

Four-day leader Yvonne Singgauan slid to sixth place as the Masters qualifying came in a close finish. Ramos and Chanata, who are competing Thai Hock on Friday night are the top 14 lead, top 12 change, top 12 mixed pool and those top scorers from the Diamonds pool.

Nineteen shoot 1,900 among the heads with 992.

Philippines Melody Chai jumped on top in the mixed pool with a 1,900 and Hong Chinese with 949 pinfalls. Cecilia Sia, a former Asian Games champion, climbed to third place with 1,621.

Asian top female player Shahin Gafiki leaped into the mixed pool with an 1,868 aggregate, while Amin No. 2 Chee Yeh Lai, also of Malaysia, climbed ninth place with 1,851.

Larios not a bit fazed by Pacquiao

LARIOS

MACK HORTON, HE USED TO HELP BUILD houses as a carpenter when he was not performing feathers for a living.

Now an acclaimed ex-pro boxer, he even didn't have some place to work. Today, he is ready to carved in a virtual finish's date in career yet another masterpiece.

No doubt, Mexico's Oscar "Ghetto" Larios is going into the biggest and most dangerous fight of his life when he meets the Pacific Ace July 2 showdown with Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao.

Pacquiao is known not only for his reflexes and power, but also for a big heart.

Larios, however, is not feared one bit, and vows that he will not only finish creditably but will upset the Filipino hero.

In an interview in Japan by ABS-CBN's Dyan Castillejo, Larios vowed to shame Pacquiao in front of his cultist fans, as he plans to draw strength from his pregnant wife, children and a fearlessly coach.

Larios, in the interview, said that his wife is three months pregnant, and every time his kids call him up from Mexico, all the pain in training turns into strength that he will use to unleash on Pacquiao.

For several days now, Larios has been holed up in a gymnasium in Tokyo, sparring against World Boxing Council heavyweight champion Nonito Donaire and would-be contend Rolando Reboloza, both neighbors like Pacquiao.

Robert L. Zagambo, Contributor

Warriors clinch Fr. Martin Cup

THE 68 Warriors celebrate their championship

AFTER NARROWLY MISSING IT TO THE finals, University of the East treasured reserves Diadez San Sebastian College Cavite Revolutions, 86-71, recently to capture the Father Martin's Cup Mike Siaosun League championship.

"Winning the championship definitely boosted the team's confidence for the coming UAAP years," said UE coach Dindo Pumaren. "More importantly, the tournament gave us the opportunity to match up against very good amateur collegiate teams."

From 22-all, the Warriors went in pointers Mark Norbuena, Rhoey Arellano and sophomore James Martinez, who gave UE a 46-30 lead at the half.

Norbuena paced the Warriors with 17 points along with eight rebounds. Arellano and Ron Ron Caronda contributed for 11 points as the Warriors were ahead by as much as 15 points late in the fourth quarter.

The Tar Sanders Lady Taneseros slightened the Adamson University Lady Falcons for the women's crown, while Ilan Sebastian Manila survived a late surge by San Beda to emerge Junior champion.

The scores

GUARD: Norbuena 17, Caronda 11, Arellano 11, Martinez 11, Ignacio 9, Bandaga 7, Lingganay 5, Aquas 3, Fuentes 2, Tenorio 2, Arroyo 1, Lumagui.

SECONDARY: Atienza 21, Nat 13, Magbanua 10, Sandia 11, Cortez 11, Pablo 2, Villareal 2, Montemayor 2, Rosario.

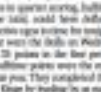
Quarters: 22-22, 46-30, 68-62, 86-71.

Don Exequiel seeks a piece of racing history

RAISE ON HIS MOST RECENT PERFORMance and purely on form, Don Exequiel, a handsome dressage colt by Bold Black out of Belle Epoque, looms as the best favorite to win this Sunday's 30 Gregorio Cup, second leg of the 2006 Triple Crown Series, at the Santa Ana Park.

CLEAN LIVING

Marnelo R. Ibigo



This upset victory over a star-studded cast in the Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. Cup, opening leg of the TC races last May 28 at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite, has deeply boosted this stock as the horse most likely to anticipate and sweep the country's most prestigious event for three-year-olds.

A fat fourth choice at the tote board if the last race, Don Exequiel, ridden smartly by jockey Ronald Bastonada, finished with flourish, winning the 1,600-meter race in 1 minute 41 seconds flat, just two seconds off the record time set by stablemate Bad Spirit, who won last year's third leg of the TC races.

Yet's Don Exequiel in good shape now? and jubilant trainer Jep Bautista of the power house Stonepa Equestrian stable.

The feature have been nominated for this Sunday's Gregorio Cup, which will be longer at 1,800 meters. Among the other entries to tackle with are Speed Sublime, Jet Setter, Tigers Instinct, Million Dollar, Hunk of Stranger and up, and coming hard to Find.

Held under the auspices of the Philippine Racing Commission chaired by retired Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane, the major prizes at stake are P1.2 million for first, P480,000 second, P240,000 third, and 120,000 fourth. The breeder of the winning horse gets P120,000.

* * *

HERE ARE THERE. Playing was to forty, pre-tournament favorites Ronald Augustine, England and Ian Germany were their early numbers in the eagerly awaited World Cup of football played in several Emirate cities. Saudi Arabia, a surprise semifinalist in the 2002 World Cup, also seem to keep their hopes alive in the month long event. Ireland, Trinidad and Tobago, Japan, Iran or Australia... A million thanks to reader Mako Bernardez of Sucoville Subdivision, Zamboanga City, for her kind and inspiring words. A sports lover, particularly basketball, Mako's favorite player is Mark Pedrosa. Don't worry first amateur's fine to share I will honor your request to write about Alvin and his family.... Newly appointed Presidential Assistant on Youth and Sports and Manila Sports Council chair Arnold "Ali" Atienza is a young man on the go. A former Asian indoorsdash champion, the 39-year-old Ali is numbered by many as a worthy successor to the sports-minded father Manila Mayor Lito Atienza. Like his father, Ali is also active in conducting charity missions in the depressed areas of the city.... My answer any Jayjay Helterbrand to sailing up for Barangay Greebo when the Kings play Red Bull in Game 3 tonight at the Fausto Sports Center in Antipolo City. Helterbrand has been sidelined for much of the bowling's top stage but he is keen on returning to the playing court.... For this year's 38th Philippine Cup, I agree with the experts' view that it will be a wide open race. It will be anybody's game in the semifinal series between Powerade and Shake, Rattle and Roll. Magnolia Purefoods and Alaska, Air21 and Welcoat Paints and the winner of tonight's down-the-wire series between Red Bull and Barangay Greebo.... In his book, "A Complete Guide to Sports Injuries," noted American author H. Milton Griffith, M.D., wrote that if an athlete suffers a particularly serious injury, one of the most important factors in his or her successful postinjury recovery is having a positive mental attitude.... Kudos to sportsman-businessman Nathaniel "Tac" Bellilla, president of the Philippine Basketball Conference (PBC), and Purefoods Vice Mayor Ang Villena for helping Olympian Eric Buhain to replace the 6th Bahrain-Philippines Crossbell Games on June 15-16. The back-to-back PBA Open champion, Buhain will be coached by Eric "Sting" Gonzales, owner of the front-running Cooking Oil Masters in the non-conference of the Gamers Brandy-NBC national championship.

ULF Maninding's Car (foreground) beats the stars of a collision in the second race.

Maninding tops Touring Car 3rd round

RISING STAR ULF MANINDING USED A QUICK start to take Round 3 of the San Miguel Cullen Proton Blue Cup Philippine Touring Car Championship Sunday at the Subic International Raceway.

The 19-year-old Maninding, also a reigning duties and autocross champion, overtook pole sitters Mathew Goldsmith at the first turn and won the race pulling away.

"This is quite a truly inspiring, the victory more than makes up for all my frustrations from a disappointing Round 2 in Clark last May 28," said Maninding, who is backed by Engineer Motors Inc., College of St. Catherine, Subic Montessori, dart High Transport, Alberto Racing, Raydom and CDI Image Design.

Maninding, despite spinning out in the second lap of the afternoon race, finished second behind Goldsmith, but was directly stripped of it after he was found to have driven ten-foot underweight.

Clavecilla sets up last-day shootout with pal Gaston

By Mysang S. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—JUST CLAVECILLA AND Francis Gaston, close friends and longtime contemporaries of the former powerhouse Letter to golf squad, scrambled well enough yesterday to set up a final-round showdown for the 2006 Philippine Seniors Amateur golf championship today.

Clavecilla, the reigning twin-faceby individual champion, fired a one-over-par 72 and Gaston carded a 73 as they broke away from the field which couldn't solve the riddle of The Riviera's rough-larger course here.

Counting his opening 70 on Wednesday, Clavecilla totaled 330 for a one-shot lead over Gaston, the former JSF ace and Senior champ, who bogeyed the 18th.

Wally Wray all but kissed his title retention bid goodbye, ballooning to an 80 that left him 20 strokes down with 18 going into the final day of the 54-hole event sponsored by Harbour Center.

Clavecilla started cool-slow and actually visited the lead on Gaston after a double bogey on No. 6 and a bogey on No. 9. Gaston was working on a one-over card after a birdie on the 16th before he missed the last green for his third bogey.

"It's going to be a good fight in the final round today," Clavecilla said. "The key is not to let Orlando take control, because if he does, it would be difficult for you to catch up."

Steve Evans Chancellor's 77 for third overall, 10 shots behind, while rival Joe Ara just struggled to an 83 to drop to fourth, another three shots back.

Ted Bayron hopes to start a one-shot lead over Tommy Arora III into victory today. He shot a 77 in Category I reserved for players aged 55 to 59. Former senator Tito Sotto could see off the duo in the final Forms after an 85 on Wednesday.

Tito Dandoy won the Category II leader 160-64) after shooting an 82. NCAP president Leon Alvendazo was second with an 84.

Ben Lidasan downed the way in Category II (65-69) with an 85 for a two-stroke lead over Danny Garmboza (87). Ricardo Quinto and Rodolfo Feliciano shared the lead in Super Senior I (70-74) with identical 82s, while Carlos Shipside a 96 to post a 10-stroke lead over former President Fidel V. Ramos (106).

SWEET THE SECOND TIME AROUND: Bobby Pacquiao shows his champion's belt on his arrival at the NAIA from Los Angeles yesterday. Pacquiao, younger brother of boxing icon Manny, knocked out American Kevin Kelley at the Madison Square Garden in New York on his first defense of the World Boxing Council (WBC) Continental Americas super featherweight crown. (PI photo)

Lascuña opens 3-shot lead in rich PGAP event

[illegible] CITY—ANTONIO LASCUÑA HEED a second straight 3-under par 69 Wednesday to zoom to a three-stroke lead halfway through the P1 million PGAP Tournament presented by Jesus [illegible] economic Splendido course.

Lascuña, a member of the national coaching staff and former winner of the 6th The Country Club Invitational, had four birdies against a bogey to visibly outdistance for a 138 total.

Rubio Sandil assembled a 67, the same card of veteran Benjie Magada, for 141, a stroke ahead of solo fourth placer Mars Pucay, who followed up an opening 68 with a 74 for 142.

Robert Mendiola shot a 73 for 144, good for a fifth-place tie with Richard Hartberg (71) and two ahead of Melvin Gay.

Only 20 players made the halfway cut in the 72-hole event that offers P800,000 to the winner. The tourney is mainly sponsored by JFC Golf Korea and hosted by Alta Operaciones.

Antonio Macaraeg, just two off the pace overnight, Bronchoyo with a 77 and stood 10 shots back at 148, the same total of Catalino Cruz, who shot a 74 after a 76 Tuesday.

Nat'l drag races slated at BRC tomorrow

A FIELD OF SEVENTY TWO DRIVERS ARE vying for various titles in the 2006 Red Horse National Drag Racing Championship tomorrow at the drag strip of the Batangas Racing Circuit in Nasugbu, Batangas.

The drivers, led by two-record holder Amadeus Tee of Team BBL, have been sweating up in their quest for supremacy in the meet sponsored by Red Horse Beer and San Miguel Corp. and supported by Pilipinas Shell, Denso, Yokohama, Castrol Hipbon and Spanco.

Tee drove his Mitsubishi Evo 8 to a winning 11.309 seconds in the pro-stock Quick 8 class in the previous meet.

BRC drag race director Fil Ordillo said participants may register until 8:30 a.m. Saturday. The races start at 9:30 a.m. For inquiries, call (032) 417-2261, 728-5000 or the 815-1240 for details.

POC Olympic golfest slated

THE COUNTRY'S TOP AMATEURS AND CORPORATE golfers will derive top honors in the first Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) festival golf tournament on June 30-31 at Hidden Golf Club in Nasugbu. The 36-hole tournament, organized by the National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP), serves as part of the celebration of the inaugural staging of the Olympic Festival. The POC is now member of the national games body in cooperation with the worldwide celebration of the Olympic movement. Top honors will be dispatched to Class A (0 handicap), Class B (0.1-9.0) and Class C (10 and above) for men, women's division (0-15), and the senior division for players 55 years and older. For inquiries, call NGAP at 525-6989, 525-5505, 893-4976 or 892-4979.

FLAWLESS: Ted Bayron [illegible]

SAMSUNG TOUR

Bayron fires ace, record 64 at Palos Verdes

DASMA—A FLAWLESS, COURSE-RECORD round with a hole-in-one is best.

That was how national team standout and Davao native Jay Bayron tore the Batangas Palos Verdes course apart yesterday, scoring a bogey-free eight-under-par 64 for a hefty seven-stroke lead in the third leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour here.

Teeing off on the 10th, the 23-year-old Bayron exploded with an incredible, three-on-each start, but it was a fantastic 6-iron on the par-3 No. 2 that found the hole that highlighted the best round ever made at the Palos Verdes course.

It bettered by two strokes the 66 established by local pro Raoul Rivera in the second round of the now-defunct First Condominium Classic three years ago.

Bayron's sizzling start left Freddie Atanan, who teamed in the early-tee with-pair round for the day, a far second with his 71.

There were a five-man tie[illegible] at 72 made up of Mike Bihar, Jason Bracker, Mark Fernando, Rickey Jaranda and Mike Yee in the tournament sponsored chiefly by Samsung and co-sponsored by Taylor Made, C-Lions Wine, Allwood, Titleist, Lexicon Clubmakers/KG and Sentosa. Media partners are Sun.Star, Prime 881, Magic 89.9 and WOW FM.

Joseph Lobajo (72) and Louie Zaradoc (74) were in the eighth and ninth places while Jay's brother Rufino and Mike Alejandro were among the players at 75, making the race for the 18 championship slots in the final two rounds tight.

The second round of Bayron, a member of the RCBC team training under Boy Lopez, also made up for the non-appearance of Jarvis Agojo, who was supposed to compete in Ladies Class A.

PSAC head Ben Mae Domingo said that Agojo withdrew at the last minute for health reasons.

Bayron got going with a birdie on the second hole, went to two under on the 15th and picked up a third birdie on the 17th for a 33 going out. After a birdie on the par-5 first, he hit an ace on the second hole and made another birdie on the third to go seven under with still six holes to go.

He settled for pars on the next five holes before earning his sixth and fourth birdie on his last hole.

Gunman kills two WC fans

BANGKOK—FROM POLICE SAID TUESDAY they were hunting for a gunman who shot dead two more World Cup fans at point blank range as a restaurant after they ignored boycott to be quiet.

The gunman was seeing next to a group of 10 Thai football fans who watched Monday's Italy-Ghana match on TV at the restaurant in the popular seaside resort of Pattaya, 70 kilometers (45 miles) southeast of Bangkok.

The lone sweat wild when Italy scored a goal, signaled Ghana in the match broadcast in Thailand in the early hours of Tuesday and an argument broke out when the gunman asked them to be quiet.

The gunman came alone and he could not fight against all the 10 people. He he used his gun to kill the victims," Pattaya police major Jeerapol Bunthongchan said, adding that the victims were aged at 20 and 43.

"We know the suspect and are searching for him," he said.

Pattaya is a beach resort town popular among Western tourists and known for its thriving nightlife and red light districts. AFP

Al Jaber joins Pele in elite scorers' group

KUWAIT—SAUDI ARABIAN STRIKER SAmi al Jaber joined an elite group of players that include Pele and Diego Maradona when he scored against Tunisia on Wednesday.

His goal took his team's 2-1 draw with Tunisia to 33 years after his first goal in the World Cup finals against Morocco in 1994 and he has now joined Pele, Uwe Seeler, Diego Maradona and Michael Laudrup as the only players who have scored World Cup goal 12 years after their maiden goal.

Brazil's Ronaldo and Ronaldinho can also join this elite list if he scores for Sweden against Paraguay on Thursday.

Pele's goals spanned the years 1958-70, Seeler's (958-70), Maradona's 1982-94 and Laudrup's 1986-98. Reuters

GERMANY'S Michael Ballack (center) gets in a shot between Poland's Dariusz Dudka (left) and goalkeeper Artur Boruc in Group A action. Germany prevailed, 1-0. AP

Germany secures 2nd round slot; Spain shows fiery form

BERLIN—HOST GERMANY CHEERED ITS FOOLAS AS IT ALL BUT ENSURED its place in the second round of the World Cup after an injury-time winner by captain and Oliver Neuville gave it a 1-0 victory over Poland.

Its place in the last 16 will be confirmed if Costa Rica fail to beat Ecuador on Thursday while Poland—first time European virgin Germany has beaten at a major finals since the Czech Republic in the Euro 96 final—look set to exit the finals every earlier in terms of days than in 2002—six vs. 16.

Elsewhere, Spain recorded a warning that—at last it might match its reputation with arrows on the pitch as it resumed its major Group H rivals Ukraine, 4-0—David Villa scoring a brace—while the Ukrainians had a man sent off.

The other match of the day, the last in the first set of four round-robin games, will not be remembered for much more than that as Tunisia and Saudi Arabia fought out a 2-2 draw enlivened simply by two late goals.

One of them by Sami Al-Jaber lifted the Saudi legend to an elite group of players—along with Pele and Uwe Seeler—to have scored at World Cups 12 years apart.

The draw meant that not only no Tunisia still waiting for its first win in the global extravaganza but also its coach Roger Lemerre, who was in charge of France's disastrous defense of its title four years ago.

The Germans looked to have run out of time as the game entered injury time having wasted several chances through Lukas Podolski and then seeing Neuville and Michael Ballack hit the bar.

However, a final lapse in the up to then outstanding Polish defense—whose side had been outlined in 38 men 11 minutes from time—saw Neuville step in and score at the death and further frank coach Jurgen Klinsmann's decision to—still the 32-year-old veteran in March as he took his total to four goals since he came back.

Ballack said the team deserved a jet on the back for its persistence.

"It was a good performance by the team as we kept on pressing them under pressure. We controlled the game well in the first half and produced a number of chances," said the 29-year-old captain.

"The last two put it into good stay-away lucky but it was wholly deserved." Neuville said that he was not a hero, merely the man who had made-up an earlier bad miss.

"I think God it worked out as it got an improvement goal a minute before the end." German coach Jurgen Klinsmann said. He could not done him proud.

"I am proud of the team, the way they large trying to have the goal.

"The result was thoroughly deserved as we kept our chip'shin and our tempo.

"In the end, with our opponents down to 10 men, we closed after the goal with all our might and it paid off," said Klinsmann, who like the coach of the 1990 World Cup winning team Franz Beckenbauer is chasing the accolade of winning the trophy both as a player and coach.

Spain were without the injured Chelsea striker Jose Antonio Reyes and Villarreal midfielder Juan Roman Riquelme but still had too much for Ukraine.

Spain's 47-year-old coach Luis Aragones took great comfort from the victory, and Germany. It was against a team wearing his host favorite color yellow.

"We have extremely talented players in Spain and we're only just starting to use the right strategy to play well in the big competitions," said Aragones. AFP

Zico vows to boost Japan's attack

BONN—JAPAN COACH ZICO, ON the pressures following the 1-1 loss to Australia on Wednesday to boost the Asian champions' attack to survive the World Cup first-round exit and salvage his reputation.

"While sitting on the edge of a cliff, we must think how to give all we have," Zico said at his "Blue Samurai" squad resumed full team training here after the dramatic World Cup opener on Monday. "We are now out of it yet." In their second Group F match against Croatia on Sunday, he plans to boost his midfield by employing his favorite four-man line line which can free up two side backs to join four midfielders in pressing the opponents.

"I will add one more to our midfield. It is the best measure for a must-win match," he said.

Zico's cautious choice back defense, joined by two wingers, pushed Japan has been dying since Australia's Tim Cahill physical footsteps space to charge in on goal resulting in a three-goal onslaught in the last nine minutes of

ZICO: WE are not out of it yet.

play.

Croatia, third at France 1998, but their opener 1-0 to five time champions Brazil on Tuesday with Kaka scoring the sole goal. A second straight loss would likely parse fatal for both teams.

"We must score goals against Croatia and never concede any to them," said Zico, a star player of Brazil's three World Cups.

About the Brazil-Croatia match, Zico praised Croatia for putting up a "close fight" against his home country.

"Indeed, Croatia charged hard hard. If Kaka was such Croatia, Croatia would have won," he quipped.

Bolton midfielder Hidetoshi Nakata, Japan's most famous football export, said the Croatians "could have won the match."

"I felt before we have a chance to beat Croatia. We just try to get the best out of ourselves. That's it."

"We have nothing to lose. We have an elusive last to clash with them," said goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi, who played in Japan's 1-4 loss to Croatia when it made a sensitive World Cup finals debut in 1998.

"They are well organized but they don't have outstanding stars any more." The captain added as the Kashima Antlers already paid off at the Confederations Cup in Germany a year ago. AFP

POLAND goalkeeper Artur Boruc lurches after the Poles' losing effort against the Germans.

Hooligans fight police; 300 nabbed

DORTMUND, GERMANY—Four days of opening World Cup calm ended with a volley of bottles and chairs as dozens of German hooligans clashed with police in Wednesday before their country's general win over Poland.

For much of the day, German police mocked with their counterparts from neighboring Poland to identify and arrest violent football hooligans without incident. It was hooliganism hooligans who lashed out about two hours before the late evening kickoff after police confronted them in a central square.

By the time rain began falling after midnight, police said they had arrested 240 German hooligans—at least 128 in the central square—and hit British hooligans.

The threat of the violence had been a theme ahead of the month-long soccer tournament. It bred soft drinks, authorities banned the sale and transportation of beer, confectioners, increased border patrols and drew up extensive policing plans for the dozen game cities.

While much of the focus was on the English, Dutch and Polish, some German officials worried about thugs who wouldn't have to travel.

"What gives me headaches ministers is thinking about how we are going to keep our own 10,000 hooligans in line," Michael Endler, who heads Germany's office that queries violent fans, was said before the competition.

Tranquility in World Cup-hosting cities had allayed much of the fear were widespread hooliganism at soccer's biggest event and even surprised police who had braced for the worst.

The trouble began Wednesday when police spotted about 40 men, later identified as hardcore hooligans, and blocked the route between the outdoor area where they sat drinking and a nearby big screen where gamers are cheering for fans.

As police began apprehending the men they screamed, "We are Germans, too. We want to go to the big screen," according to witness Christel Jansen. AP

Jaidi header gives Tunisia 2-2 draw vs Saudi Arabia

MUNICH, GERMANY—RADHI JAIDI scored the equalizing goal in injury time Wednesday to help Tunisia hold Saudi Arabia to a 2-2 draw in Group H of the World Cup.

Jaidi headed in Ziad JAIDI's cross from 10 meters (yards) only minutes after Sami al-Jaber had given Saudi Arabia the lead.

Al-Jaber, a 34-year-old veteran, picked up a through ball and dribbled it past Tunisia goalkeeper Ali Boumnijel with his first touch in the 84th minute.

Al-Jaber, who came on as a substitute in the 62nd minute, has now scored in three World Cups. He also scored in 1994 and 1998, but failed to find the net in 2002.

Tunisia took the lead in the 23rd minute when the Saudi defense failed to clear a corner and Jaidi dropped his left shoulder and saw the ball hard into the top-left corner of the net.

Saudi Arabia nearly recovered its poise, and midfielder Yousuf al-Thaqafi was at the center of the team's most dangerous moves.

The Saudis were a string of free kicks and corners, and Tunisia's 40-year-old goalkeeper had to dive sharply to stop a free kick from Redha Tekka in the 37th that was rocketing toward the left post.

The Saudis finally struck back with a smooth passing move in the 57th. Nasr Mohammed got away from Tunisia defender Hamdi Nagguez down the right and crossed for Yasser al-Qahtani to slip the ball past Boumnijel at the near post.

Both teams now have one point in Group H. Earlier Wednesday, Spain beat Ukraine, 4-0, in the other group match. AP

SAUDI Arabia's Khaled Aziz (front) and Tunisia's Radhi Jaidouni go for the ball during their Group H match which ended at 2-2.

Nadal finds his feet on grass; Roddick avoids fall

LONDON—JOHANN WORLD CUP football searchers have inspired rivals Portugal Open champion Rafael Nadal to his first grass win victory after a year off the surface.

The top seed at Queen's club took to the court with perfect timing after Spain polished off a 4-0 win over Ukraine Wednesday.

While little pressure and just a few hours of training on the surface since arriving in London on Monday evening, Nadal ripped into the third round with a win over American Mardy Fish 7-6 (7) 7-5, 6-1.

"I'm serious about this, it was a very important victory for me," said the world number 2. "It was a nice surprise.

"Fish is tough, he has a very good serve, he's difficult to play on grass."

The Challenger title that 86th-ranked American won at the weekend in Surbiton ensured for little as Nadal's reservation favourite.

The 20-year-old last planted his feet on the lawns in a Wimbledon second-round loss last summer to Gilles Muller.

Nadal improved his 2006 record to 30-3 with five titles, he is riding a 25 match win streak since losing to good friend Carlos Moya in Miami last March.

Second seeded Roland Garros semi-finalist Ivan Ljubicic rolled over Romanian Razvan Sabau 7-6 (8/5), 6-2 to reach the third round after the last game for the top-eight seeds.

Holder Andy Roddick made an unsteady step toward a fourth consecutive title here as he has shed past inspired Canadian qualifier Frank Dancevic 2-6, 6-4, 7-5.

Roddick's first match of the season on grass was marked by early struggle as the world number 3,07 Dancevic playing his fifth match on the surface since last weekend, broke twice to claim the opening set.

It took all of third seed Roddick's good of experience to finally get things right, emerging with a lucrative win after winning on after break point chances in the nine-hour, 25-minute contest.

Skinny fitted Roddick, arthritis a title shot last October and not even a final to show for in 2006, to an impressive 36-1 mark at Queen's, the top Wimbledon warmup.

Home fans were served up a dynamite contest around lunchtime on the lawns as British ops Andy Murray awaited out to Serb Janko Tipsarevic 7-6 (7/3), 3-6, 6-2 in a match interrupted with Murray losing 3-2 in the second set on Tuesday.

A year ago, the 19-year-old from another big-match breakthrough here.

But without a coach for two months, Murray has seen only two recent matches and failed to thrill the local public on a grey day. AFP

NADAL: Not only good for clay.

HEAT'S Shaquille O'Neal holds up a rope during practice for Game 4 of their NBA Finals against the Mavericks.

MAVERICKS' Dirk Nowitzki fades his shooting

Heat hoping to keep fire versus Mavs

MIAMI—INVOKING A STEP LEFT RAVE, DWYANE WADE HOBBLED to the yellow maintenance cart and slipped onto its flatbed. He propped himself up against the front seat and settled back for the short ride to the Miami Heat's locker room.

"Can I drive?" Wade asked. "I always wanted to drive one of these things."

Sorry, not today, he was told.

Wade's request will have to wait. Right now, the only significant driving the Heat want to see from their flashy guard is aimed toward the basket.

One day after salvaging Miami's season with a 42-point, 13-rebound performance in Game 3 of the NBA finals against the Dallas Mavericks, Wade spent Barbecue getting treatment on his aching left knee, which he injured when teammate Shaquille O'Neal accidentally fell into his leg.

"I was a little nervous about it this morning," Wade said, playfully running his fingers across the black tights over his knee. "But I'm going to try and go. Hopefully I can be 100 percent."

Wade wasn't enough in those pants. Considering the stakes in Game 4, prayer may be required of the Heat faithful.

Although he wasn't at full speed late in Tuesday's game, Wade brought his team back from the edge of almost certain extinction by scoring 13 points ... 12 over the final 6:36 — in the fourth quarter to rally Miami from a 13-point hole and pull the Heat to 2-1 down in the best-of-seven series.

According to the league, it was the second largest comeback in finals history, and, it was the latest turnaround to Wade's soaring status as one of the game's most clutch players.

"He's just fabulous," O'Neal said. "He's a great one. And he's not going with a lot of room to improve. It's going to be fun to watch him."

Wade evoked the usual compliments to Michael Jordan, a parallel he's not comfortable with at all.

"No one should be compared to MJ, man," he said. "There will never be one MJ. That's it. I'm not him."

Wade ignored foul trouble and constant seeping into his knee to bring the Heat "back from the dead to win," as coach Pat Riley put it.

Wade's closest contenders were — by all accounts — his teammates. Allen Iverson scored 46 and O'Neal 44 in Game 1 of the 2001 finals ... was asked by Dallas' media-relations director from the mouth.

Perhaps no one giddy at the prospect of taking a 3-1 lead in the series, the Mavericks, as dominant as former 1 and 2, were 2-of-7 from the field, committed five turnovers and were outscored 22-7 over the final's 11. AP

Madayaw Team rules Enduro SML leg

THE TOP THREE PLACERS FINished about outside 1.0 minutes of each other to underscore the spirited competition to the Motocrosse leg of the Enduro fun filly Light Adventure Series 2006 recently.

Madayaw "racer-line by-statistic" Team pumped the fastest and quickest times in the field, finishing in four hours, 38 minutes and 10 seconds.

The team of Jessie Ray Reyeros, Bart Demabelle and Felino Tadiamon won P15,000 for doing racing the second of three legs of the series which culminates with the Black Rag on July 7 and 8.

Rudy Project ETPP-Triad, made up of Elvis John Luna, Mary Anne Milan and Dexter Nonan, came in second in 4:26.27 and won P10,000. Team Joint Triad secured up third in 4:33.22.

Team Reverse Sensory Gamers and the Musketeers leg out a big success. "The enthusiasm and aggressiveness of the racers were overwhelming. Great. Guy proved a good event for adventure racing. The place made the race more interesting, tricky and challenging, which pushed the participants," Rudy Project ETPP-Triad, made up of Elvis John Luna, Mary Anne Milan and Dexter Nonan, came in second in 4:26.27 and won P10,000. Team Joint Triad secured up third in 4:33.22.

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Aside from Sun Mg Light, the other sponsors are the SM Seoul, Gaweon and Bathspit, and Cebu sightseers Car Cafe, LH, Pain-Budha, Pizza, Vi Latitu, Kumdja, Sindig, Nada, Power and Subspace Cafe.

The finals in Manila will have run races for novice and elite participants. The first leg was in Cebu City last May 27 and the just concluded second leg were reserved for novice-novice.

The novice race — composed of participants, weekend warriors, students and outdoor adventure endurances... still see their skills in a long-hauling 4-6 hour race.

Expected to vie for the coveted place in the elite category are some of the former national volunteers and hardcore athletes who will battle it out in a grueling 10-hour race.

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Pimentel stays clean, bolsters gold medal bid

MAPHOTO: JOEL PIMENTEL OF BACOLOD City hosted Beryl Wenamoah of Indonesia Thursday to snatch his winning run to six and move closer toward the gold medal in the boys' 13 and under division of the 7th Asean Age Group Open Championships at the Mercure Convention Center in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The 14th ranked Pimentel, in recording freshness of La Salle-Greenhills, prevailed with the black pieces after 43 moves of a Sicilian Defense-Najdorf variation to boost his total to a perfect 6.0 points.

Pimentel grabbed the lead by beating overnight co-leader Seng Bao Sipha of Vietnam after 46 moves of a Slovacky Grad encounter in the 60th round last Wednesday.

Pilita told the tournament Guru of Bangalore, Manila, breezed back to contention in the boys' 12 and under following back-to-back victories over Le Nguyen Quoc Thuan of Vietnam and Aditya Sanchia of Indonesia, respectively.

Pilita, who is also coached by his pupil of Sto Dodo College raised his total to 5.0 points.

Paulo Bonanima of Pasay City scored 3.5 points in two outings and also soared in the title hunt. The 10th seeded Bonanima whipped Wesli Li Tan of Malaysia and settled for a draw with Seng Ba Hua of Vietnam to improve his record to 4.5 points to be the boys' 8 contender.

Also scoring 3.5 point after two games of play and reaching 4.0 points is Paulo James Flaviano of Cembuanga City in the boys' 10 and under.A

Boys' 15 and under Ian John Raoul Bonanza of Pampal, Tarlac, shielded to 3rd pick Tee Wei Ming of Singapore in Tie moves of a Siverson Sicilian to top at 5.0 points.

Melvyn Kenneth Baltazar of Malabon City drew with Le Hue Thai of Vietnam in the sixth round to lodge at 5.0 points.

In the distaff side, Charline Chenelee Camacho of La Trinite, and Ruby Vivis Jose also scored wins in a row Camacho trounced Dewi Johan of Indonesia in the fifth and Chelsie Monica Sihite of Indonesia in the sixth to rise to 4.5 points in the girls' 12 and under.

Jose downed Nguyen Thi Thu Quyen of Vietnam and Margaretha Jane Rotha of Indonesia to finish to 4.0 points. MM Martinez Reporter-at-large

Titanic battle seen between Tiger, Phil

BARRINGTON, NEW YORK—A TIGER battle between Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson at Winged Foot Golf Club would make this week's US Open one of the most memorable major championships in recent history.

But the first time since Woods began his dominant run in late 1999, the world number one appears to have a consistent challenger at the game's highest level.

Left-hander Mickelson boasts a third consecutive major title at Winged Foot and, in the minds of most of his peers, tops the pro tournament rolling.

The last giant, Woods is outlanding on the unknown. He returns to competition golf after an absence of more than two months, having grieved for his father Earl who died on May 3 after a long battle with cancer.

A nine-month break is hardly accidental. Including but Woods is renowned for his unwavering focus and his quest to build on a career tally of 14 majors underpins his approach to the game.

"I'm here to compete and play and try to win this championship," the 30-year-old American told a news conference this week.

"I know that Earl would still want me to go out there and give it my best shot, and that's what I always do.

WOODS: Embarking on the unknown

MICKELSON: Continues challenger

"That's what I will certainly try to do this week."

Asked whether he was concerned about being a little rusty, Woods replied: "I'm not. I've taken the longest breaks have been after my knee surgery in 2002 and this past season taking six weeks after wrist surgery.

"Both times I've come back and I've won. It's just one of those things where it's your preparation, your practice and your attention to detail when you are preparing.

Mickelson is unquestionably the game's in-form player and blue his chances going into his 16th US Open.

"I've come to the point where I enjoy the challenge of trying to be successful in those very difficult tests of golf," said the likeable Californian, who clinched the US PGA Championship at Baltusrol last August before winning the US Masters in April.

"I know I can play well in this tournament, even though it doesn't necessarily fit my perception of how I've played and how I've thought and so on.

"I still have had some success here, and still be trying to do it for tomorrow this one golf course at this one event."

Having endured a 12-year wait before making his major breakthrough at the 2004 US Masters, Mickelson is determined to add to his career's purse of grand-slam events.

He has made three separate trips this year to Winged Foot to refine his playing strategy on a layout characterised by thick and heavily manicured grasses, thick rough and tight fairways.

"I feel I know the course as well as I can," said the world number two, who will celebrate his 36th birthday on Friday.

"But I will have a great challenge, and the challenge is executing, hitting the shots. That's the toughest part." Reuters

Apa sees view from roof of the world

SHERPA

KATMANDU—NOBODY KNOWS BOAT THE view is like from the roof of the world as well as Apa Sherpa—he has climbed the world's highest mountain a record 16 times.

The wiry 46-year-old sixth emerged should, then is regarded as the king of all climbers by climbers and peers alike, and last month he raised his life and will's quest to return to Everest's 8,848-metre (29,028-feet) summit.

While news that he had again conquered the "death-zone" made him the toast of the town in Nepal's Thamel, in Solukhumbu district in the foothills of the Himalayas, his second wife wasn't joining in the celebrations.

"When I told I had ordered it was not due to any physical condition, but due to family pressure," says Apa Sherpa, who announced he was quitting in 2003.

"My wife did not know about this season's summit until I reached there. She was very angry," he adds, breaking into an infectious laugh.

Despite his promise to quit, Apa was also back atop Everest in 2004 and 2005.

His wife's fears are understandable as a mountain that has claimed more than 200 lives. Danger stalks a climber's every step up Everest, including the indigenous sherpas who work as support crews to foreign mountaineering expeditions. AFP

Calilan's gone but JRU intact

JESS FELIX, UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC DIRECTOR Paul Dupas (centre) may smile over the resignation of coach Eric Calilan (2nd from right) two weeks before the start of the NCAA basketball season, but when Dupas admitted that Calilan brokered his resignation, he stressed that the long-time JRU stalwart didn't take any players with him. "Our team is still intact. We have no problem with that," he said. "Coach Eric decided to move on." Dupas, who sits in the league's management committee, added that they are considering the top collegiate coaches as Calilan's replacement. The list didn't include Universities Jimmy Mariano or another coach.

RP junior boxers bag 2 golds

BAGUIO—The four-man Philippine junior boxing team captured two gold and two silver medals to end their fruitful stint in the 1st Hanoi International Boxing Competition among women, cadet and junior fighters here.

Michael Perigone (46 kg) and Orlando Tacosan (57kg) proved too strong and classy against their Taiwanese rivals to rule their respective classes in the 14-country championships.

Perigone won over Ching Chun-wei via an RSC-III (referee stopped contest-retracted) in the second round, 25-4.

Tacosan, who was later adjudged the best boxer in the junior division, proved too much for Ching Chu-juei as the referee likewise stopped the contest at 38.30 in the second round. The Filipino earlier disposed of local boxer Nguyen Van Manh in the second round.

The three-member RP women's team—Southeast Asian Games champion Alice Ann Aguar, Anna Alfonsa, and Mitchel Mariano—also forged into the gold-medal matches in convincing fashion.

Aguar outpointed Ni Lasha's Chahdi Ka, 23, 12; Alfonsa stopped Vietnam's Vu Thi Hai Yen, 14-1 (RSC-I/I) in the second round; and Mariano lashed Thailand's Rairo Rivakhe, 18-3 (RSC-I/I), also in the second.

SEA Games gold medalist Michel Mariano gunning for another gold.

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Pops is 'it'

'Contravida' to Zsazsa's Zaturnnah, that is

By Boyet Sun Diego Jr.

JOHN FERNANDEZ HAS BEEN CAST AS QUEEN Imelda Ikaw-wellan Marcos, the man-hunting diva and sex-bomb of Zsazsa Zaturnnah, Carlo Ratgan's comic-book superheroine.

This development was confirmed by director Joel Lamangan and Regal producer Lily Monteverde, who are fielding the comic book's movie version in the December's Metro Manila Film Festival.

Lamangan also revealed the names of other confirmed cast members. Playing the role of Imelda's ladies-in-waiting will be Gisella Sanchez, Tuesday Vargas, S Bravo and Maureen Larrazabal.

Dodong, Didi

Although Didi Saavedra was considered, Alfred Vargas remains as Dodong, the love interest, said Lamangan.

The role of Didi, funny sidekick, is yet to be cast. Original choice Allan K backed out, Lamangan relayed, "in deference to [his 'Kay Balagat' co-host] Vic Sotto, who also lost on every in this year's MMFF (Tinang Kahirap it)."

Other names being considered as Didi are Pinky Conde and Jaime Gibbs, but Monteverde admitted that her heart was set on Ogie Alcasid.

Ogie was originally tagged as Ada, a role that will now be played by Rustom Padilla.

Pops is raring to be interviewed in Zsazsa Padilla's Zaturnnah.

"I don't mind at all being the villainess," Fernandez told Inquirer Entertainment in a phone interview. "This is something different. It's exciting."

Ultra-sexy

Pops did her homework. She asked her manager Arnold Ilegalda to buy a copy of the comic book for her. "It was hilarious and, well, gay!"

Is Pops ready to don Imelda's ultra-sexy costumes?

"It's not sure if I can pull it off," demurred the mother of two. "But I'm willing to undergo training for this role. There'll be fight scenes, so I need to look convincing."

If it seems, was how she described her working relationship with Zsazsa. "I've worked with her on [TV shows] KSMP and 'Morning Girls.' I know how hard she's been preparing for this movie."

Asked how she finds her man-hating role, she joked: "Isn't it lovely?"

Lest the public get the wrong impression, **she wasn't alluding to the turn in her life...** former husband Martin Nievera and rumored boyfriend Jonnel Ylana.

Healed

"Martin and I have chosen to be friends," she seemed up. "I've healed a lot."

She tactfully dodged questions about Martin's girlfriend Xtrimia Opelo's supposed clash with the couple. "I don't think it's proper for me to discuss it. It should come from Martin."

As for Jonnel?

"I'll rather not talk about him," she said. Suffice it to say... "He's fine and I'm happy."

She explained: "I have a lot of things to be thankful for. Like, my son Robin graduated from high school. My younger son Ram dreams of being a cartoonist and is graduating in three years. Bobby wrote a song for me, called 'Friend.' He even agreed to sing it with me in my upcoming album. Also, Martin wrote a note for me, titled 'Still In Love,' believe it or not!"

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Building a new life together

By Mel Valera

FREEDOM DAY CAME A week early for Marvin Agustin and his father, Danilo Cayagan.

Last June 2, Cayagan, who was serving a sentence for drug-related charges at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa, was granted parole. He was reunited with his family.

Reconcile Marvin told Inquirer Entertainment on Tuesday that having his father back was like having a new best friend live with him in his condominium in Wack-Wack, Mandaluyong City. Cayagan had been estranged from his wife, Teresa, Marvin's mother, when he went to prison.

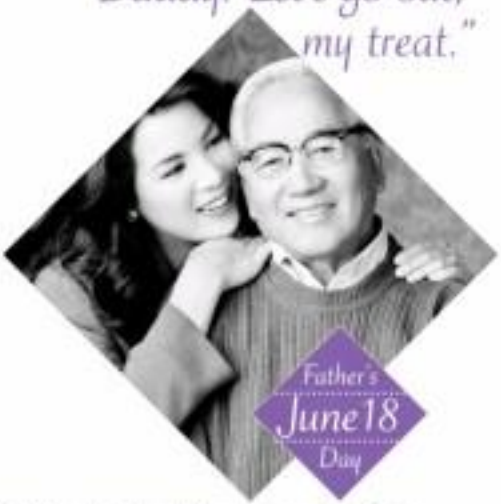
"Although I am his son, I think I being best friends in the relationship that would work best for us," said Marvin.

The actor described his recent days with his father as a series of bonding episodes.

"We would go jogging together in the morning. Seeing during the day, I would ask him to come with me to outings, so I take him to my restaurant (Tuscan Kate in Shangri-la Mall). He asked me to take him

BUILDING P.A2-1

"It's your special day today, Daddy. Let's go out, my treat."



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G4	1 CARS	2 THE OMEN	3 INSIDE MAN	
	4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	5 TAKE THE LEAD	6 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	7 THE DA VINCI CODE
GB1	1 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	2 THE OMEN		
GB3	1 CARS	2 THE OMEN		
	3 TAKE THE LEAD	4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	5 INSIDE MAN	
ATC	1 CARS	2 INSIDE MAN		
	3 THE OMEN	4 TAKE THE LEAD	5 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	
ACC	1 THE OMEN	2 CARS	3 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	4 AQUAMARINE / X-MEN
M2	1 THE OMEN	2 CARS		
	3 TAKE THE LEAD	4 INSIDE MAN	5 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	

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Building a new life . . .

Pretongate A2-1

to his shrewd appraisement. It's really we're doing things together."

Marvin was only 14 when his mother sent him aboard Sinbad boat. The actor described his family's life at the time as a never-ending struggle to make ends meet.

Odd jobs

"I survived fourth year high school doing odd jobs," Marvin recounted. "I would sell longganisa and tocino at night, go to Baclaran to buy goods for my mother to sell. It was very hard for the family when my dad went to jail. We sold everything we had. We were down to our last centavo."

The struggle eased for the Guyanes when Marvin was discovered by ABS-CBN and eventually became a matinee idol. He has now evolved into a serious actor and is eyeing to try his hand at directing.

Reconciliation?

Marvin admitted that he would love to see his father and mother reconcile as husband and wife.

"Both say they are still adjusting," Marvin said. "Si Jasmine is the one I worry for. But how long will they have to admit to each other before they move on? I am not having the issue. But the more they delay, the more they fail to see the blessings in front of them."

He said he would still play the role of head of this family even if he already has his own children—Sebastien and Santiago, his 18-month-old twin sons from a past liaison.

"I'm a father myself and I feel guilty sometimes knowing that I can't be with their mother," Marvin admitted. "But I've moved on and am looking the best of my circumstances."

Moving on

Marvin has also moved on in his career. After his 11-year contract stint with ABS-CBN's Star Magic, the actor declared his independence and moved to GMA 7, where he was immediately cast in the telecerye "I Luv New York."

"I'm very grateful to ABS-CBN," he said. "The network helped shape my career and brought me to where I am now. The reason that I asked to be released from my contract was lack of projects within the network."

He said what he was being offered did not seem right for him.

"At this point in my career, I feel that I have time to wait for the right projects," he said. "[But . . . however] When the offer came for me to re-unite with Julia [Montes], in GMA 7, I felt that there was something in it for me. I was touched by Dolly, it was not from ABS-CBN."

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7 THE DA VINCI CODE
8 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
9 TAKE THE LEAD
10 THE OMEN

ERMITA
1 GARFIELD 2
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
3 X-MEN 3
THE OMEN
4 LAKE HOUSE
5 CARS
6 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
7 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3

METRO EAST
1 THE INSIDE MAN
THE DA VINCI CODE
2 CARS
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
5 THE OMEN
X-MEN 3
6 LAKE HOUSE
7 GARFIELD 2
8 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING

NOVALICHES
1 GARFIELD 2
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 THE OMEN
4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
5 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
6 LAKE HOUSE

CITISQUARE MALABON
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2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
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5 X-MEN 3

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2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 THE OMEN
4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH

ANGELES
1 CARS
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
3 GARFIELD 2
4 LAKE HOUSE

IMUS
1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 LAKE HOUSE
3 THE OMEN
4 GARFIELD 3: A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES
5 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
6 CARS

STARMILLS
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2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 GARFIELD 2
5 LAKE HOUSE
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BACOLOD
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2 CARS
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Look! Up on the screen! It's Superman!

Homepage A2-4

that if she were here, she'd say that Dave should swap her off her last Daughter). I am pretty sure she would say that. But she was with me before all of this started. She was there on the first day when we had a meeting for the role and watched me dump Julie Superman. She actually was Lois for me many times since I practiced some scenes with her. We were both there for the first flight at the same time as it has been fantastic to share her.

Did she find the film sexy?

Yes. She likes the whole thing. She was a big Superman fan as a kid. She has her own stories on trying to become Superman so she was really excited about this.

You mentioned that your sister is a musician. Do you also sing and play instruments?

I play trumpet and piano and I sing. But among those skills, I am best in impersonating. I sang for a long time and did boy bands in middle school and high school but my voice is probably better in a group than in a solo voice. Maybe with the help of technology I would sound great enough to sing in a musical film someday (laughter).

"I HAVE a lot of Clark Kent, too," Brandon says.

If you had super powers, what would you want those to be?

I would like to have super powers to help bring about awareness of and touch openness in people. I would fly to a lot of places and speak to a lot of people and use the character and the spirit of Superman to make people in goodness and in the strength of positive. I still use the super powers to prevent natural disasters and avoid devastation around the world. And maybe fly some kids around so they can feel what it's like to fly.

Earlier you said that after a while, celebrities become more human beings. At the Golden Globes this year, was there anybody you wanted to meet?

I would have loved to meet George Clooney because he does those amazing things in Hollywood and I am really proud of what he has done with his own films. I would have also liked to meet Will Arnell. I was very close to meeting him but I never got to shake his hand and my bulls. I sat with the cast of "Will & Grace" and that was fun. They were great.

What makes a man a man?

It becomes not only being human with other people but also being human with yourself. That's the most important thing. If you don't know who you are, you are not confident about how you feel, you don't have opinions and don't stick to those opinions, then you are going to be wishy-washy. That's one thing that happens to me. Hi, I'm wishy-washy (laughter).

Superman has a double personality. What about you?

I definitely have been much like Clark Kent in the past. A little awkward and clumsy. I have that part of me, thanks to my mom (laughter). People don't believe this now but I sound the most yapa- he kid in school, and I do wear glasses, although I wear contacts most of the time. But my other side, I show strength and confidence. We all have dramatic personalities to swap.

Can you tell us more about yourself?

I went to the University of Iowa for a year where I was an English major. I wanted to be a novelist. I am still interested in writing. I don't do it as much as I used to because I don't have much time. I also had an interest in graphic design. I like drinking logos and designs and creative stuff like that. I went to Los Angeles in the fall of 1999 when I quit school to give acting a shot. I never really thought that I could become a movie star. I came from a small town in Iowa. I did some modeling just to make some money then I was a year of yoga session. That led to acting. Yeh, when I met a talent manager who actually said I looked a lot like Christopher Reeve. I thought I had a little bit of talent, too, in comedy- improv. I had planned to be in Los Angeles for three months and then three months turned into seven years. I made a big leap from soap opera to Superman.

(E-mail the entertainment editor at tempoday_2006@yahoo.com.)

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(Not Once But Twice)

Good guys don't stand a chance

THE REMAKE OF THE CLASSIC thriller, "The Omen," is an overmorally gripping and scarifying film. Without a forewarn, after all of its hostile and fear-inducing moments have receded in recollection, the movie's total impact is overpowered by the last few, throughout the production, evil eventually triumphs, and the good guys don't stand a chance of surviving, let alone winning.

Now it may be true that demonic forces are universally wrong, especially because they are brilliantly cushy, while good people tend to be too trusting and even clueless at times, thus enabling evil to hold sway much of the time.

But, for evil to triumph all of the time, all the way up to the movie's distressingly portentous final coda—hey, that's unacceptable.

Worse, it robs the production of any real sense of conflict since, barring the get-go, the "forces" of good turn out to be so weak and ineffectual.

In every sense, they're unmotivated, foiled and beaten by Satan's minions, who seem to hold all the aces in the film's lethal deck of cards.

In the remake's retelling of the original's chilling story, the US ambassador to England and his wife adopt a baby who—unbeknownst to them—is the son of Satan, destined to emerge as the dreaded Anti-Christ upon reaching adulthood.

It makes one's hair rise to see this well-to-do couple, who have everything, be so completely hoodwinked by Satan and his earthbound acolytes who help him entertain the good people around him...eventually bedazzling the ambassador's wife (Julia Stiles), who has been his loving adoptive mother for five long years.

All sorts of warnings and ominous are raised in the course of the storytelling, but they're all so caught up in the good guys keep dropping like flies.

NEW MINSTRELS

New Minstrels tonight

NEW MINSTRELS' "TNT: 1535: Manila Reunion Concert" tonight at 8 at the Idea Theater, cophilled by Eugene Villeta, Bay-Ani Pacanza, Louie Reyes, Cesar dela Paterno and Joey Albert.

SHOW TIME

Today

Bandoo performs starting at 8 p.m. for participants of Wizard in Concert at El Integrado at the Basement, Chan Towers Bldg., Carlos Palanca Street.

***

Gary Valenciano's album tour, "Reinvence," goes to Mall of Asia at 5 p.m. On June 18 at 8 p.m. "Gary V Live" at Globe's 6 Park. Then he performs at Ayala Centers Cebu on June 30, 6 p.m., Alabang Town Center Activity Center on July 1, 4 p.m. and Market Market on July 8, 6 p.m.

Tomorrow

Sarsuela Diwa, 9, the Philippine Music Training School and Network Production's Nine Aces's Way Inst 2006, stars in the mini concert "What's Up" at Robinsons Place, Ma nakaban, 2 p.m.

GARY V

June 18

Diana rosa's "Sarsuela Inst 2006" mall tour, sponsored by Universal Records, goes to SM Dampanga, 3 p.m.

Attention: Skycable

From Cathy Uy, Pasig City (by e-mail):

Here in Pasig, Skycable has started forcing all Skycable subscribers to use an additional set-top box to access their programming. This means you can no longer change the channel on your TV set, you need to do it through the cable-ready box. The problem is, this stops us subscribers from being able to tape shows. Since ana's VHS player or DVD recorder can no longer change channels (ano ba yan nasusunod changer channels yung ma-set-timerable box), ano nan only tape one channel (whatever channel was last set on the addressable box). This means, if you go out of the house or while you're sleeping, you can't tape different shows. This is very expensive. I was so irritated, I discontinued my subscription. You should do an article about this.

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POWERBOOKS Specialty Store continues to share the pleasures and benefits of reading through its new branch at SM Mall of Asia. Located at the ground floor of the mall's Entertainment Building, Powerbook's newest store has a specially choice section for children.

High school reunion

ALL alumni of Camachen Navy Chung Hua High School are invited to a general assembly/meeting on June 23 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the CHHS quadrangle. Dues, Committee Seats, Court speakers is Committee Room Gen. Room D. Tuscon St.

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Look! Up on the screen! It's Superman!

NEW MAN OF STEEL: Buzz has the bulge in his trunks was reduced digitally almost eclipsed any other talk about the production. The actor says it's "good publicity."

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD
Andrew V. Pugno

LOS ANGELES—THE FIRST time we met Brandon Routh (Warner) with mask," he told us), the new Superman, was at one of the Golden Globe post-parties last January.

Standing in a hallway in the Beverly Hilton Hotel, Routh, then wearing a black suit, reminded us immediately of the late Christopher Reeve. Tall, with classic good looks and a model's jaw, Brandon stood in line to get into the party but stole the cake of "Superman" returns," a $200 million plus production mark, being the return of the blue of blood, drawn will most mightily opening up the hint from now on.

You may have seen the 6' 2" tall actor in the 2000 season of MTV's critically slumped soap "Undressed," Gladiators Apollo in "What a Girl Wants" video, "Ultimate Girls" and in both thirteen-on-the daytime soap "One Life to Live."

Filmed in LA and Australia, "Superman Returns" also stars Kevin Spacey, Kate Bosworth as Lois Lane, James Marsden, Frank Langella, Eva Marie Saint and Parker Posey. As told in interactive lore, he remembers being so excited to watch one of the "Superman" movies of Christopher Reeve that he threw up.

In the following interview, Brandon, speaking with the charm and modesty of a man who grew up in a small town in the American Midwest, talks openly about his life—which will surely change with "Superman Returns"—and leaves breathing his Man of Steel.

For a while, buzz about his name-based being so, so mammoth that the bulge in his red trunks had to be digitally reduced, almost eclipsed any other talk about the production. Was the word a blessing or burden per-se-20 plus pounds of muscle for his big role, the new Superman not seems with extra padded muscles, a patented bulge booster and a supersuave professional actor?

Can you talk about recent articles pointing to Superman as a gay icon?

When people see the movie, they can see that the film is obviously about Superman and his relationship with Lois. On Superman as a gay icon, he is known for all walks of life, all countries, all races and all religions. People who don't like Superman are the ones who really frighten me (laughter).

Where George Clooney portrayed Batman, much ado was made about his Batman suit having nipples. Does the Superman suit have nipples, too?

No, Superman has nipples, too. You just don't see them but it sound that funny. Sorry guys. The first time I put on the suit, it was a little rash. weird because I was in a room full of costume designers and people all

dont have to get up at 4 a.m. to work out which was awesome. I am working out three days a week now.

Why do you think director Bryan Singer did not tell you right away that he wanted you to be Superman?

Bryan would have liked to tell me very early on that he wanted me to have the role, but he did not have the final say. He would have selected one of my assists to get the role.

Describe the moment when you were actually told the role was yours.

I found out before it was released to the media. I told my parents and my family but, during that time, it was very close to Christ passing, but all seemed to make sure this done was a gradual transition so that it didn't feel like

BRANDON Routh during the interview with members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

we were on the outskirts of anything. It wasn't long after that, that people found out. But my parents did have to keep the secret because of my job from all very soon showing up to talk about the role and to ask. They showed up in town without telling me. I had to be nice. They got the brunt of it more than I did because nobody knew where I was. I was told to just.

Were you able to concentrate and get on with your life after you landed the role? Did you worry that the movie might not be made?

It was pretty much the only thing in my mind. I continued funneling and living what I needed to receive.

You said that Christopher Reeve was like a super hero to you. Where he died and his wife Dana died too, how did you feel?

Both Chris and Dana were really amazing people. I didn't have the opportunity to meet them in person. I feel like Chris' spirit and legacy he brought to the characters really does live in this film through me because he was an amazing inspiration to me. Dana took on a very nice calm halfway through filming, giving her blessing to the film and to me. She attended dinner my screenplayer to Chris and that she thought that was neat. It was great to know that we were not doing something against her wishes. It was very important and for us people are thinking that I remember Chris, that is a great compliment.

Are you aware that from now on you will always be known as Superman? Do you stay in shape for the rest of your life or will you become flabby if the sequel is just around the corner?

I've thought about being always known as Superman from heroes. What a fantastic thing. It's a great legacy I'll be able to do great things outside of the film business as well because of this character. I still work out but not as much. Not six days a week like I was doing before. And I

glasses.

Can you tell us a bit more about Bruce's note and did she also send you a Superman pendant?

Yes, she sent two "Get focused" pendants and here's mine. I gave one of the key chains to my father which he proudly wears. Those things are to raise money and awareness for the Clark Reeve Paralysis Foundation. Also, the care handwritten note from Dana expressed her happiness that there was one film being made. She mentioned that she had met Brandon before and that she was confident that Bryan would do a great job. She also thought it was cool that Jordan Ellis Clark.

How do you plan to avoid the pitfalls of fame? Smoother your lifestyle.

People always tell me, especially since it came from a small town, "Don't change." They are right. I am going to start saying, like a brother or a bad mannered celebrity. I will listen to that but I am also going to change it in very positive ways. I am very comfortable about who I am. I am very confident in the way I live my life. So I'm an lifestyle is concerned, my girlfriend and I just want to sit and watch movies. Our favorite thing to do is to watch or listen to the audio commentary on DVDs. I hang out with my friends and I play basketball. All that glitz and glamour stuff is the same after a while. You see the same people, and celebrities just become normal people after a while. It sometimes feels more like a chore and you don't have fun when you are doing stuff like that. I do things that are appealing to me and that's not always going out to clubs because the music is so loud and I feel like saying, "Could you turn the music down?" I am trying to have a conversation with somebody."

Did you get to keep your Superman costume?

No, I didn't. I don't have room for one right now. I don't have a big house in Hollywood Hills (laughter). I have so much Superman memorabilia already that a mannequin of me with a suit on wouldn't fit—plus, it would be scary at this time to wake up and see that mannequin.

Can you talk about your girlfriend?

Courtney Ford is my girlfriend of two and a half years. She met at the lucky Strike bowling but subsequently on Saturday. Her brother was having his wedding rehearsal there so I was giving him shots of tequila. I met the entire family that day. I ended up getting her phone number. We had our first date two days later. We went to a dinner and to a show of my choice, Serafin, who is a musician. Sarah has a track on the original soundtrack of the movie.

Is Courtney an actress?

Yes, she's an actress and a producer. We have a film that she produced and that we both starred in. It's called "Dazed" and it's about the 24 hours after one man has to take life has to decide between the women of his dreams and reality. It is so different from "Superman."

How did Courtney react when you told her that you were going to be Superman? Are her expectations higher or the same as sweeping her off her feet?

I would like to think

SUPERMAN A2-6

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STARS Living

Editor Bonnie G. Velarde

Welcome to the lifestyle of SHOWBIZ CELEBS

OUR FAVORITE CELebrities welcome us into their homes, show us their favorite nooks and throw open their closets. They tell us about the books at their bedside, allow us to get to know their pets.

They take us to their parties, bring us on behind-the-scenes pictorials and location shoots, share with us their shining moments or, maybe sometimes, even their most outrageous (hilarious?).

Can't get any better than this.

Fridays, starting today, Stars Living gives you an all-access pass.

THE SEXIER, THE BETTER

The rules of the game, according to Pilita Corrales: 1) A singer should sparkle; 2) Better to suffer in high heels than to look flat in flats; 3) Go for stretchables—the sexier the better. More in Out of the Closet continued on page A2/3.

INSIDE

■ Geneva's favorite nook, Heart's book /A3-4

CESAR Hernando, Joyce Bernal, Martin Nakpil Jr., Tony Gloria and Sunshine Cruz

TOMMY Abuel, Mel Martinez, Elijah Castillo, Christine Dayrit, Ferdinand Lapuz and Brillante Mendoza

Celebrating industry bigwigs

CHINGGOY Alonzo

ROY Iglesias

JUST HOW BIG, THE BIGWIGS?

Industry stalwarts like National Artist for Film Eddie Romero and wife Carolina, Regal matriarch Lily Monteverde, actor Ernie Mercado and wife Sunshine Cruz, Lindol producer Tony Gloria, "Pinoy Big Brother" graduate Ruffa Gutierrez and "Wanderers" director Bebot Mendoza "stooped" to Mexico for and Restaurant in Greenbelt Makati, to attend the party thrown by Bobong Velez for Christine Dayrit, dean of the Lyceum Evaluation Board (CEB) and the Intercontinental Film Festival Committee (Office), and Jacky Atienza, head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP).

PARTY! PARTY!

The welcome committee consisted of big names, too...new Illoilo directors Vicente del Rosario of Viva Films, Mimet Dayrit of Reelmovers Films, Tikay Aquino, Marina Makalintal of the French Embassy and Jun Julian of the international production house Philippine Film Studio.

The only Illoilo directors not around that night were Bienvenido Lumbera, National Artist for Literature, and Edu Jacque of the Department of Tourism.

Also present were CEB members...film maker Joyce Bernal, TV host Butch Francisco, entrepreneur-director Chedeside del Mundo Jr., actors Tommy Abuel and Chinggoy Alonzo and screenwriter Roy Iglesias.

LILY Monteverde

Other VIP guests were Malou Rosana and Andrea Ibarlata of Imus Productions, writer-director Tom Lazaran, filmmaker Quark Henares and his mom Dr. Vicki Belo, Mags Nisa Bautista of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, Mabel Rapanoy of ABS-CBN, fashion director Bobby Carnaweo, entertainment editor-agent Ferdinand Lapuz, among others.

"Best Artists" child star Elijah Castillo, best dress at the Singapore International Film Festival, won a gift card from Mikaboy during the raffle.

Some boys have all the luck.

CARDS, INK and Cindy Romero

MAMET Dayrit, Christine Dayrit, Tom Lazaran and Vincent del Rosario

BUTCH Francisco and Vicki Belo

BOODEN Carreon

PIOLO as Ka Serafin

MOVIE poster by CJ de Silva

TOL Soriano

Piolo on his first indie
How could I go wrong?

AWARD-WINNING MARINE BOY PIOLO PASCUAL plays a rebel guerrilla in "Kagat ng Dilim," a US$ million film written and directed by Cesar Hernando. This is Piolo's first dark film and also his foray into the independent cinema. It premiered May 31 at SM Cinema in Greenbelt 3.

The audience consisted of directors, cinematographers, students, other filmmakers, advertising practitioners, artists, the entertainment press, and film enthusiasts.

SNEAK PEEK

Three photographs were taken on the set of the movie (in Tanay), which will be shown in SP 20th-mm in August.

"Kagat ng Dilim" is set in the 1950s. Piolo plays Ka Serafin, leader of a group that patrols the mountains of Oriental Luzon. Conflict ensues when the group members mysteriously fall one by one, all with strange bite marks on their necks.

Hernando says the story is fiction based on facts.

"Direk Cesar's offer came at the right time," said Piolo. "I had always wanted to do something different."

He said he had been intrigued by the script and thrilled at the opportunity to work with, aside from Hernando, director of photography Rudy Lacap, film editor Jess Navarro, art director Gener Red, sound designer Jessie Rotinda, and musical director Jonie Donato and Mitch Lopez.

"Actual title includes exclam-ation (That's the best, how could I go wrong!)?" Piolo says, smiling.

CESAR Hernando (center) directs Piolo Pascual and Katrina Garcia

ALBEN de Jesus and Piolo in a crucial scene

'Director Cesar Hernando's offer came at the right time. I had always wanted to do something different'

CESAR (second from right) and the Holes (from left) Danny Red, Jun Velez, Ernie Cierra, Jess Brantone and Piolo. Seated from left, Mike Llarena and Bonnie

MULT-arm munching watch and earrings—gifts from her good friend German Moreno.

Bending over backwards to sing and SPARKLE

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guico Pumaloy

SINGING WITH HER top half bent back—and rotating eyes to tone to coat—is a Pilita Corrales trademark. But not many know that Asia's Queen of Songs finds it difficult to sing when not wearing high heels.

"Bending helps me hit high notes, and high-heeled shoes help me keep my balance," Pilita said in an interview at her home in New Manila, Quezon City. "Let's put that at three and a half inches or higher."

The Cebuano beauty—and, everybody knows, an international celebrity—admits that her shoes are not the most comfortable to wear. "I'm willing to suffer for many hours just so I can wear them," she said. "When it comes to shoes, comfort is only secondary for me."

During various entertainment runs on Sunday, Pilita showed us some of the most memorable pairs in her shoe collection.

The singer also allowed us a peek into her collection of gowns, and gave us tips on how best to take care of such valuable pieces.

"My clothes can no longer fit in my closet," Pilita said. "I've had to ask our carpenter to make wooden stands to hang my gowns on. Some are in the hallway. Those I use for my TV show ("Lapit Ka, Hanambong Kita," DZRH 7:3, 11:45) and just in boxes."

Asia's Queen of Songs is scheduled to fly to Las Vegas for a show on July 15. She will be in San Diego on July 16, in San Francisco on July 20, in Sacramento on July 23.

Meanwhile, Pilita is one of the three judges in the reality talent search, "Philippine Idol," on ABC 5.

SHOES

I bought a lot of my shoes in Las Vegas. That's where you find great shoe shops. There are many shops you find in Las Vegas that you won't find anywhere else in the United States—the stuff made for show girls or people who perform on stage.

I wear either very, very flat shoes or really high ones. For performing, they have to be really, really high.

On "Lapit Ka," I wear high heels shoes only because the boys (Benjie Paras, Joey Marquez and Richard Gomez) are all very tall. For example, if I'm wearing flats and I talk with Benjie, talkatin-gale na ako. I won't feel comfortable when the director says my close-up will be coming from his bedroom or from the bathroom.

Honestly, some of the shoes I wear for shows are really uncomfortable. But since I like the shoes, I am willing to suffer.

This pair (brown high-heeled, high-cut leather boots) was given to me by a producer of my show in San Bernardino, California. When I'm in the US, I'm always in rules. She knows that I'd love looking for the perfect boots for a long time but couldn't find any in the Philippines.

GOWNS

I wore this velvet I purchased at the Carnegie Hall (shows a black velvet gown with sequins and beads). I don't remember who made this. I also have one in silver. This was provided by the producers. It's very, very heavy. I don't wear this anymore, although I'm still thinking... if I were to wear it again, I would have to change the headpiece. They're not as shiny anymore.

I still wear this (billowing, sequined, silver snowflake gown). I first used this in my show at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in New York. I bought this in the United States. I like it because it looks beautiful on stage, because of the color of the fabric and the beads.

This one (black long-sleeved velvet gown with beads and lace) I first wore in a show at the MGM Mirage in Las Vegas. It was the show I did with Carmen Soriano, also my last show with (the late singer-comedian) Bert Marcelo. Carmen and I wore the same design, Muslim-inspired. Mine was black and hers was white.

This orange crochet gown with sequins is very revealing. I have to wear a beige bathing suit and body stocking under it. It's beautiful, and I don't mind wearing it coz just roll it and put it inside my bag. I've worn this many times.

The black dress with gold embroidery is by Jimilo Frasco. I wore this in a show at the Sydney Opera House in Australia. The cuffs is in the side and goes all the way up. Pinakaiksan ko po ang slit. I wore this for a commercial recently. They produces Hanabi's.

Velvet is great. You can use and reuse it. You can just redo the embroidery if you don't like it anymore. Hindi ka na gagastos nang malaki. Gowns are very expensive these days.

I prefer all my gowns to be stretchable. Since I'm a singer, it's important that I can breathe properly. It's also important that I can walk comfortably while on stage.

Since I wear a lot of see-through dresses, most of these have built-in camisole, or bra and shorts, so I don't need underwear. Everything is attached to the gown. This works well especially when I need to change outfits during a show. No zippers. I just pull it on.

I sweat a lot on stage. So wet dry the gowns inside the sun before sending them to the dry cleaners. But if a gown has been dry-cleaned two or three times, sometimes we send it home. That's when I stop wearing them.

Before flanging them, I put my gowns inside plastic bags. This prevents the beads from snagging.

Fully beaded and see-through dresses have become my trademark. This is because I work in big theaters. You have to have a little bit of sparkle if you perform in Las Vegas or any big theater, otherwise, nothing effect. If you're wearing dresses of plain fabrics, you at least have to have a big brooch.

Current nowadays are made of plain fabrics, but I think those are better for television.

TOPS

The cutoff I wear for television is really very casual. I cannot wear very revealing tops on TV since I play mother to four big boys in the comedy scenes. Unless I'm asked to wear something different—like for the episode with Dingdong Dantes, where my children think I'm in love with him—I wear a sexy top with mini skirt. Most of the time, the outfit is toned-down.

Personally, the sexier the better. It's good to wearing tight-fitting outfits. I never wear sleeveless clothes, though. I always go for long sleeves or elbow-length sleeves.

PRINTS

Even jeans—I like them screwdriver. That is so I don't have a hard time sitting down and getting up.

Plain-color pants are best for long hours of taping. Pulot na lang nang polo ang blouse. I have all colors of pants to match all kinds of tops.

HIGH-HEELED shoes—"three and a half inches or higher"—help her keep her balance.

BAGS

Gold and silver-colored bags, as well as beaded bags are the "in" thing these days. These bags were gifts from my daughter Jackie Lou.

I only have one rule in buying bags: they have to be big enough to accommodate all my things. I cannot use small ones, even when I just go to private dinners. I want to be able to put all my things in one bag.

A bag doesn't have to match my outfit. I don't really buy class many bags here. I buy my bags abroad. But if I find something that I like in some swagger here—whether it's fake or not—I buy it.

ACCESSORIES

This belt made up of colorful stones was given to me by Governor Mercado. It has a matching watch and earrings. He brought it in the Middle East. A lot of my friends say they like this belt.

This stainless necklace and its matching earrings were gifts from my husband Gustavocruz Carlos Lopez).

Still likes her shoes somewhat, as she doesn't have a hard time sitting down and getting up.

STYLISHED necklace is a gift from husband Carlos.

I don't like wearing really big accessories, especially on TV. I prefer simple ones. Nowadays, you can buy a lot of these here. The key is just to match them with the right outfit.

(Pilita will be performing with her children Jackie Lou Blanco and Ramon Christopher, and reminisces Elizabeth Ramsey and Ricardo Montaner in a show titled, "Best of the Music Museum" on July 29.)

"YOU have to have a little bit of sparkle if you perform in big theaters, otherwise, waning effect," says Pilita, who has sung at Carnegie Hall, MGM Mirage and Lincoln Center.

ORANGE hand-made crochet gown has to be worn with body stocking.

GOLD gown with built-in camisole, or bra and shorts. No zippers.

A DAMAG Prince number, first worn at the Sydney Opera House.

In this corner...

GENEVA CRUZ

I spend a lot of time doing myself in this corner. This is the first place I go to when I wake up, after I take a bath, and before I leave for work. This is where I put all the stuff I use for work, like my Mac lipstick and lipliner, or Lancome gloss that I really like. Also on my dresser is Jessica Simpson's Dessert Beauty line. I have her edible body cream in choco-coconut flavor. You apply it on your skin, put some candy sprinkles and...lick it.

FAVORITE NOOKS

Marinel R. Cruz

A '*deity*' in coco and piña fabrics

By Angelo Bardoney Ureta
Correspondent

THE HEDONISM HALL OF THE celebrated Adlib Museum in Japan (an hour and a half southeast of Tokyo) was filled with swains of international Filipino royalty on May 28. Filipino singer-actress Chin-Chin Gutierrez was performing songs from her award-winning album, "Chin: A Collection of Philippine Lullabies."

Against a panoramic view of the Shigaraki mountain range, Chin-Chin regaled an audience of over 200 VIP guests, for whom it must have been a first taste of Philippine culture.

Chin-Chin was personally invited to perform by museum benefactor Kimiko Koyama—president of Shoyo Shoreikai and chief of the Shoyo Culture Association—at our meeting last in Manila last January. Koyama said she had been impressed with Chin-Chin's "spirituality, respect for nature, and expression of beauty through art."

She said Chin-Chin, an advocate of ecology and cultural heritage, "exudes a character that is fine and pure, capable of elevating the hearts and minds of her followers."

The Adlib Museum, designed by renowned architect I.M. Pei, houses over 2,000 pieces of Shinto art and token artifacts. Art critics from all over the world have hailed the museum as a "haven for the senses and the soul," not only for its exquisite architecture but also because of its impressive collection of ceremonial and religious objets d'art.

SHOW STOPPER

To the delight of her audience, Chin-Chin ended the performances with a lyrical rendition, in Ilocano Silvengs, of "Inkaw"—accompanied by the Shonoi Taiko Ensemble—and the Miss Moriarty's theme song, "The World of Beauty."

Chin-Chin was garbed in a Filipiniana gown woven from pineapple, coconut and banana fiber's, with shoes and accessories made from braided water lilies, created by Davao-based designer Eutemio Balvoso. Guests remarked that she reminded them of a classic Filipina goddess (*diwata*) story, whose captivating beauty matched her melodious voice.

The next day, Chin-Chin performed her Ujayi repertoire before a crowd of over 400 men, women and children, in temples into the Higashi no Iseo opera theater, built along the mountain slopes that surrounded Shonoi's natural spiritualism farm.

"It is really through preserving nature and art that one reverences his spirit," Chin-Chin said of her unique experience in Shiga. "And it is the spirit that energizes, rebuilds and sustains the world of beauty that we all long for, transcending barriers of language, race or creed."

CHIN-CHIN Gutierrez sings "Sakura" with the Shonoi Taiko Ensemble, left. Her gown was created by Davao designer Eutemio Balvoso. Her sandals were made of braided water lilies.

Star & Siam

ERIK SANTOS

I now own my dogs...Star is a Pomeranian Spitz. Siam is a Dachshund. A friend gave Siam to me right after I won the grand prize in "Star in a Million" in January of 2004. I received him after the show. Star came to a year after. She was already 2 years old when I brought her home. I really pamper them. I make sure they eat only branded dog food – Pedigree for Siam and Cesar for Star. A fan, who is a veterinarian, gives them vitamins and makes sure they get their vaccines on time.

TAIL TALES

I don't bring them to work. Since they're very good dogs, they get pretend a lot...fabulous: I play with them at home whenever I have time.

Star, who knows how to climb the stairs, goes to my room and sleeps under my bed.

Marinel R. Cruz

CHERI MERCADO

ABC 5 news anchor's books range from "Rich Dad, Poor Dad" to "The Da Vinci Code" and "What to Expect the First Year."

'Just enough light'

HEART EVANGELISTA

I'm reading Stormie Omartian's "Just Enough Light for the Step I'm On." It's the perfect book for Lenten [Season] reading. Christian like me. It's a collection of devotional readings, perfect for people experiencing changes in their lives. This helped me handle intrigues well. I came out of a really bad experience unharmed. My good image remained intact.

BOOKS

[Heart was referring to her battle with tabloid news that she was pregnant by a man other than her current boyfriend, Jericho Rosales. She said she had heard rumors that she had an abortion, too.]

Marinel R. Cruz

BUSINESS

Editor Raul D. Pangalangan • Assistant Editor Cecile S. Marinas

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4-month OFW remittances up 10.8% to $3.7B

Growth in April slowest in 17 months

WHAT'S INSIDE

Oscar's winner

13 Mindanao projects worth P1.58B get perks

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 17 MONTHS, THE growth in overseas Filipino workers' remittances fell below double-digit levels at 0.34 percent in April to $899 million from a year ago due to the shrinking number of new workers deployed abroad, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

Since November 2004, monthly OFW inflows posted double-digit growths year on year and even hit an eight-year high of $1.04 billion last March as remittances jumped 15.4 percent.

Nonetheless, the cumulative January to April remittance level of $3.7 billion posted a double-digit growth of 10.8 percent compared to the same period last year and the 10-percent growth projected for 2006," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. announced yesterday.

The slower growth in remittances in the first four months of the year was attributed to the reduction in the total number of deployed overseas workers. Using preliminary data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) on new hires and rehires from January to April this year, Tetangco said the total number of deployed workers fell 2.7 percent to 269,402.

The number of land-based workers, which comprised 74.7 percent of total deployed OFWs, dropped by 5.8 percent to 201,137 while newly deployed sea-based workers were higher by 8 percent at 68,265.

"Partly compensating for the effect of the contraction in the number of deployed workers was the concerted aggressive marketing campaign conducted by local banks such as (their) giveaways, bonus of

» MONTH B2

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Shares recover slightly

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SHARES B3

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COCKTALES

Victor C. Ignatius

IT HAS ONLY 18 REGULAR EMPLOYEES...9 officers, 17 managers and 12 supervisors to order around. It's cash and the personnel—yes, in this year of operations has churned out P1.5 billion in profit on revenues of P9.1 billion.

In these tough, competitive times, that represents a clean, downtown-proof 29.4 percent margin. Welcome to Manila Seeds Inc., Monsanto Corp., the Lopez crown-jewel developer and operator of the North Luzon Expressway and related arteries that is now the object of hot-it affections from Manuel V. Pangilinan and his Metro Pacific Group.

Another Lopez affiliate, which operates and maintains the NLEX road, collected P-912.7.5 million in profits on first year revenues of P1.3 billion, or a respectable 36.7 percent spread.

Despite the healthy returns, First Philippine Holdings chair Oscar Lopez told shareholders Wednesday that both assets were still "below expectations," partly as a result of the higher toll rates and drops in because of soaring fuel prices.

Out of the P5.1 billion in revenues, P3.4 billion came from tollway fees, the balance some from duties on tolled cargoes and fuel consumption that established gas stations and strip malls were since the Lopezes took over the 84-kilometer expressway and discarded the government's "pay-peanuts, get potholes" operating philosophy.

Next year, MWSS will begin work on phase 2, which would extend the NLEX with U.S.- and the South Luzon Expressway, and eventually link up the Luzon emerald backbone with the Subic-Clark-Tarlac road, another Lopez project, and the U.S.-era Mabohar highway.

If needed, First Philippine Holdings still has plenty of wiggle room to raise debt/equity

No birth from Bataan

FORMER Secretary Alberto Romulo claims that by December 2005 decision to terminate a P1-billion contract for the digital passport project has the go-ahead from the Department of Justice.

The problem is, the DOJ opinion was only issued May 23, 2006, a good five months after contract termination.

In canceling the project, Romulo claims that the proponent, BCA International, did not have enough capital despite BCA already having finished phase 1 and spending P304 million for the build-operate-transfer project.

Unlike the Lopezes who had been allowed to borrow up to 60 percent of the North Luzon Expressway project cost, Romulo disallowed a BCA proposal to invite foreign partners to acquire or raise debt up to 60 percent of the passport venture.

But four years, BCAs investors, duke'ns Espano and Bandanio Gandolla, have no problem and business grantas a la Lopez, with the two mainly relying on their native and professional talents in putting forward what they had thought was an unassailable bid.

The other top player, Cesar Quintelano (he represented the V7 in SCC), has been booted out from the computerization project in the push-ridden Land Registration Authority.

But that is another story.

Heard through the grapevine

EQUITABLE PCIBANK that we in next board meeting on June 29, with Ferdinand Martin Romualdez being invited to the meeting with, not clear indication not whether he would sit as pet back his "two chair" title.

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4-month ...

From page B1

fraud case, increased visibility through product development, efficient modes of money transfer such as borrower online banking, phone banking, bills payment services and increased remittance centers and for agri-farm," Reinoso said.

"These bank initiatives offered overseas workers with a wide array of instruments to choose for their hassle-free remittance transfer to beneficiaries," Reinoso said.

The major sources of remittances were still the United States, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Japan, Hong Kong, and the United Kingdom.

Bankers said OFWs prefer "promising value, or getting more for their money, or whenever faced with the beneficiaries, instead of sending in bulk to avoid the temptation to splurge on spending.

The SSS is looking at a lower OFW remittances growth of 10 percent this year, from the actual growth of 20 percent last year due to the new global rules such as more strict implementation of anti-money laundering measures and immigration policies in First World countries.

The World Bank's Global Development Finance (GDF) 2006 estimates that remittances flows—defined as the sum of workers' remittances, compensation of employees and migrant transfers—exceeded $225 billion world-wide in 2005, of which $167 billion went purely into developing countries. The flows, including those received through informal channels, could be higher by 50 percent based on conservative estimates, the report said.

"Recently, high oil prices have enabled remittance flows from oil-exporting countries. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation have been important sources of remittances to developing countries," the publication said.

The GDF 2006 also said the depreciation of the US dollar, which caused the value of remittances when converted into other currencies, as well as the growth in the number of migrants and their incomes had contributed further to the surge in these remittances.

Shares recover ...

From page B1

gains following a sharp downturn earlier this week, dealers said.

They said sentiment got a boost from the rebound on Wall Street Wednesday although led-stream profit-taking remained game.

The composite index finished up 14.80 points at 2,089.88 after trading between 2,067.66 and 2,095.79. Volume was 832.05 million shares worth P1.04 billion. The broader all-shares index gained 7.09 points to 1,225.28.

Lalaven led losers 45 to 10, with 46 stocks unchanged.

"What we saw is a more technical bounce," said Jonathan Sanchez of Banco de Oro.

He said a five-day slide, which saw the main composite index to its lowest level in five months on Wednesday, made some blue chips cheaper.

"It's a good time to do a trading play for now," Sanchez added.

Online brokerage iTrade.ph.com said the recent sell-down was a bit overdone, adding the recent correction in global commodity prices had also helped ease worries over inflation.

Gains in SM Prime Holdings helped lift the main index, with the stock up 20 centavos to P7.35.

Ayala Corp. gained P1.50 to P450 while mid Bank of the Philippine Islands advanced 58 centavos to P47.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. fell P3 to P3,570.

San Miguel A shares ended unchanged at P64 while its B shares added a peso to P71.50. AFP

Gov't posted budget surplus of ₱5.8B in May

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POSTED a surprise budget surplus of ₱5.8 billion in the first month of May.

The May fiscal position—the first time in 23 years that a surplus was achieved this month when revenues are seasonally low—was due to a combination of higher revenue collection and prudent spending, Finance Secretary Cary Teves said.

The government also posted a budget surplus of ₱17.4 billion last April.

This summed the first-month budget deficit to ₱462 billion against the ₱479.8-billion shortfall posted in the same period last year. It also exempted the ₱76.6 billion budget shortfall incurred in the same month last year.

"The positive fiscal performance for many brings to closer to achieving our budget deficit target of not more than ₱120 billion this year," Teves said.

The development showed up the local spot foreign exchange market, with the peso rebounding off the year-low of 52.48:$1 hit on Wednesday to close stronger at 53.10 against the US dollar yesterday.

For the month of May, total revenues surged by 21.2 percent to ₱89.7 billion from ₱98.4 billion a year ago.

The bureau of internal revenue contributed ₱63.7 billion, 26 percent higher than the previous year's. The Bureau of Customs likewise posted a 43.6-percent growth in revenues to ₱17.6 billion from a year ago.

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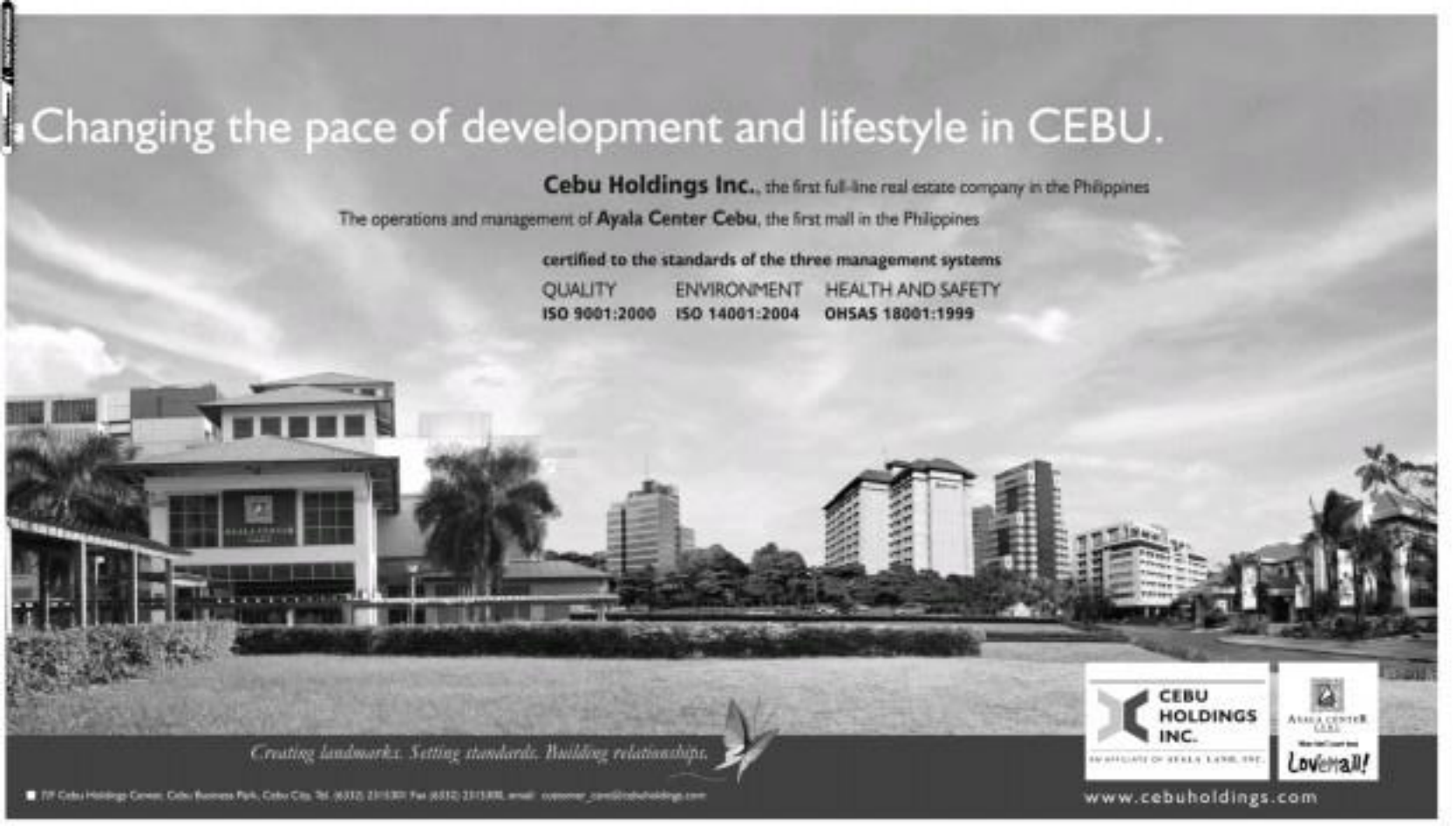
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Highlands Prime eyes projects outside Tagaytay

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

[illegible] Highlands Prime Inc., majority-owned by the SM group, is planning to invest in projects outside Tagaytay, its home base for luxury projects, [illegible] said.

Herrera said the company has extensively identified some pieces of property in the Luzon area, particularly in Metro Manila and the nearby provinces—for development but declined to elaborate.

"We are doing some studies now. With our expertise, we are open to prospect outside of Tagaytay," Herrera said.

HPI could also take advantage of up-and-coming under to parent, the SM group, which has a vast landbank all over the country.

Herrera earlier said HPI was spending roughly P1.5 billion over the next two years to finish its key projects in Tagaytay.

Expected to be completed this year is The Enclaves in Tagaytay Midlands. The project is worth a little over P500 million. It is a 9-hectare low-rise condominium development.

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Growth Fund - Peso	1.44600	1.41601
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2399	1.2351

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THE LANGUAGE of pampering (and healing) is a universal one articulated mostly by the hands.

More than just pampering

'Filipinos can contribute to spa industry by developing therapy industry here'

By Alice T. Vergara

FORGET FOR THE MOMENTthe call centers and the need for English-speaking Filipinos with an accent unknowing. If there's one industry content and nurturing Filipinos with a modicum of English can easily excel in, it's in the estimated $56-billion spa industry.

"Filipinos have the heart, hands, heritage, intelligence and relaxation to become excellent [massage] therapists," said Dennis Siegel, managing director of the Turning Point, a Singapore-based resource organizing company.

That's one good description, but Filipinos can be better because none of them speak English."

Singapore-based Siegel recently visited the country to promote the annual Spa Industry Seminar (Sept. 13-17). Now on its third year, the seminar, to be held in Singapore, will be held for the first time in the Philippines at Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort and Spa in Cebu (tel. (032) 231-0230).

Siegel decided to hold the seminar here upon the invitation of Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano, who's working on turning the Philippines into a spa destination. It was evidently no hardsell since Siegel was in search of someplace to hold the seminar outside the Lion City.

"It's a global gathering held in a relaxed atmosphere," he said. "We've decided to hold it elsewhere because there's no environment big enough in Singapore to accommodate the growing number of participants."

Seminar speakers from the world over will tackle such topics as spa trends, holistic approaches to touch and spa design, spa and personality in spas, spa software programs, opportunities and challenges in the tourism, building a spa brand and the role of marketing and PR, among others.

Speakers include big names in the industry such as Joan Ellis, Andrew Gibson, Carroll Dunham, Michael Quinn, Elaine Fenzel, Mary-Elizabeth Gifford and Troy Bullek, among others.

They'll be joined by Filipinos

SIEGEL

Cielo Bellanes-Revilla, president of the Spa Professionals International Development Center, and former health secretary Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan.

Bellanes-Revilla will give insights on how to create a serving culture within the spa. Galvez Tan will talk on bliss, considered as one of the country's traditional bonding therapies, and on stability in a multicentum spa treatment. As such, the seminar is aimed more at spa owners and executives.

This theme, however, isn't an attempt to discount the importance and future of massage therapists. Since the spa industry is just one component of the wellness explosion, said Siegel, the potential for Filipinos to excel in such a growing business either here or abroad is great.

"People are hungry," he said. "At the same time, they want to live healthier, more active lives. People are going to spas and buying more health supplements as part of this revolution. They seem to have a bigger responsibility for their health partly because they don't trust doctors that much."

And where does the Filipino come in? There's a current dearth of natural therapists even in established spa destinations such as Thailand and Bali because most of these have been taken over elsewhere or are simply swamped by demand, said Siegel. Given the proper training, he believes 50 spaces can fill up the dock.

"It's similar to what you've been seeing with nurses," said Siegel. "Filipinos can make a comparative to the industry globally by developing a therapy industry here. Exporting Filipino expertise and skills will in turn make the Philippines a spa destination."

Right now, they're in the Philippines can also manufacture on the world a new form of massage therapy based on the traditional dolot or deep-tissue massage.

In fact, through its spa academy, Shangri-La Mactan's Chi Spa is currently training 18 Filipino therapists on a new treatment based on bliss.

The group will be the first batch of therapists to be sent to Chi Spa in Muscat, Sultan that an authentic Filipino massage provided by the spa association of the Philippines is conducting the training based on a screened "template."

"What it also comes down to is marketing," said Siegel, who believes that the world is more ready for more affordable chain spas in the mold of fast food restaurants like McDonald's. "Spas have to differentiate themselves from others by adopting menus modernized techniques as part of their marketing efforts."

It's not just all about pampering, he added. Spas, for instance, are now being integrated into hospitals and are also found in not a few airports, cruise ships, hotel lodges and even some communities.

Filipinos these days may not be as proficient as their parents and grandparents were in spoken English. But they're no less caring and responsive to the needs of others. Portentously, the language of pampering (and healing) is a universal one articulated mostly by the hands.

E-mail the author at vergara@inquirer.com.ph

RP is promising market for toys

SOMYS

WITH PLAY AS ONE OF THE WAYS WHERE children master new and sometimes complex skills and mastering abilities, toys help fuel interest with objects for their own amusement while working on cognitive and motor skills.

Toys "R" Us, the world's largest specialty toy retailer, recognizes the role toys play in the holistic growth of every child. Thus, for over 60 years, it has been offering its customers the "right products at the right price, at the right location and at the right time in a pleasurable and convenient shopping environment."

That same vision will soon take shape in Philippines when Toys "R" Us opens its first store in the heart of Bonifacio Global City.

Toys "R" Us begins Huntington D.C. as prague business founds Charles Lazarus in country to kids' needs after going one baby boom to it focused to its customers' needs, a started expanding to merchandise in children's apparel and playthings.

Toys "R" Us is now an $11 billion company with some 1,400 retail stores in more than 30 countries worldwide. In the US alone, there are 680 stores; internationally Toys "R" Us operates licenses or franchisees of about 570 stores.

In Asia, the formidable Li & Fung formalling became Toys "R" Us international's franchisee and gained 100 percent ownership of Toys "R" Us Asia. Toys "R" Us is the leading toy retailer in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia, while simultaneously providing avenues for entry into new markets including Thailand and China.

In 1246 Pulilan, Bulacan and Che-Nobleman Retail Group forged an alliance to bring the popular toy store chain to the Philippines.

"SM, days a year, we make sure we create, or to provide our customers the best blend of local and international toys and the unique "wow" experience each time they step into a 'Toys 'R' Us store," says Toys "R" Us Asia CEO Hanne Schütz. True, in spite of the highs and lows in the economy, Filipinos don't scrimp on the country's approximately 90 million people with large families and lots of kids (and kids at heart), the Philippines is a promising market for Toys "R" Us.

Boasting of a 2,500-sq.m. store space, the Galleria flagship store will be a big "toy box" of surprises and quality toys, playful and small packs, books, educational and developmental products, games, sporting goods, juvenile furniture, and electronic educational and entertainment multimedia software, among many others.

True "R" Us Galleria highlights seven stores: Boys, Girls, Infants, Fun and Games, Outdoor and Sports, Exercise of Imagination (comprising science and educational toys), Education, the E Zone, and Babies "R" Us. These sections cover a family of brands such as the most sought-after toys for boys (indoor and outside fig. toys, trucks and wheelers), for girls (arts and crafts, role-playing stuff from dress-me-up dolls to mini kitchens) and infants (a variety of developmental toys to educational items (from baby plastic or wooden blocks to the latest hitlife technology). It will also include a unique race track concept which will allow shoppers to experience each toy category or zone.

Schutz said the whole Toys "R" Us team plans to build a solid market base in Manila and eventually expand its network across the Philippines. "We plan to open three stand-alone stores within the year and will aggressively convert the toy sections of Robinsons Department Store into Toys "R" Us Express," Cuneo explains.

"Toys" products sources from one country to another. For instance, it's Christmas time in Christian countries, Ramadan in Arab countries and Chinese New Year for the kids in the Orient. I'm quite certain that the Philippines will break all records," Schutz confesses.

Common mistakes firms make in branding and marketing their products?

FIRST'S OUR GUEST COLUMNIST, best-selling marketing author and brand evangelist, Al Ries. He is joined by his daughter, Laura Ries, co-author of The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding and The Origin of Brands. They will both be in Manila next Friday, on the 23rd for the in-person sponsored Al Ries' Brand Marketing Conference.

Q: You've both worked with numerous brands on the Fortune 500. What lessons can Ries offer, especially to Asian companies that want to go global?

Ries: The biggest lesson is that big, successful companies don't always follow the laws. And Asian companies that try to emulate them may be doing exactly the wrong things.

To be successful, a small company has to follow the laws. But a big, rich company can ignore many of the laws of marketing and still remain big and successful because of the momentum of the past.

Take Sony, for example. Much of what Sony is doing currently violates many of our laws. As a result, the company is just getting along. What made Sony what it is today is what happened in the past. Sony was the first company to introduce a transistor radio. They followed with a number of other "firsts" that turned the company into the world's most admired electronics company.

Q: Do you marketing people to study the past. Don't look at what companies are doing today, but many companies are doing exactly the wrong things. Look at what made companies successful in the first place.

Q: What are the mistakes most commonly made by companies in the branding and marketing of their products?

Ries: Line extension. Putting the company name on every product. You don't stand for something if you put your name on everything.

Take IBM, for example. It used the IBM name on its line of personal computers which have never made money for the company, in 22 years, IBM reportedly lost $15 billion on desktop computer lines which they eventually sold at a loss.

Today, Lenovo is making the same mistake IBM made. Instead of using a separate name for their computers line, they are using the Lenovo name. Lose association strikes again. What they should have done is to locate an laptop computers only and then use the ThinkPad name as a brand name, not a model name.

Q: Today's techno times must brilliant marketing strategies you've witnessed in all these years of working with brands.

Ries: One of the most effective marketing laws is the law of the opposite. If you're not the leader, you should be the opposite of the leader. Mercedes-Benz made big, comfortable cars, so BMW focused on small, more nimble "driving" machines. In the process, BMW outsells Mercedes in most countries of the world using their long-time slogan: "The ultimate driving machine."

Creative Technology invented the hard-drive MP3 player, but buried their invention under a low-octane name, Creative Nomad Jukebox. Apple Computer took the same concept, gave it a distinctive name (iPod) and turned the idea into the most successful product of 21st Century. This case history is a good example of the power of focus. Creative Technology made a wide range of products under the Creative name. Apple made a few items and then focused most of the resources of the company on their new hard-drive MP3 player.

Dietrich Mateschitz visited Thailand and experienced a drink he had never heard of, called Krating Daeng. He changed the name to Red Bull and built a worldwide brand with current sales of $2.5 billion.

Mateschitz's key invention is the name of the category "energy drink." People don't buy brands. They buy categories. If you want to launch a new brand that could be a worldwide success, you first have to create a new category. Mateschitz did it with energy drink. Apple Computer did it with hand-drive MP3 players.

Q: How should Asian companies brand themselves and their products? Could you name one deadly sin to avoid and one golden rule to follow?

Ries: The two deadly sins are:

1. Using your name. (putting your company name on everything)

2. Lack of focus (trying to sell too many products to too many different markets.)

The two golden rules are:

1. Be first in a new category.

2. Keep your company focused.

These are simple, conceptual ideas, of course, but not easy to execute. Many people think marketing is smiling but common sense, but it's not. Marketing is a highly complex discipline that takes decades to learn.

Q: From your observation, how different are Asians consumers from the rest of the world?

Ries: The interesting thing about travel is realizing how similar people are no matter where you go. Whether it is a town in India or a city in Europe or a small country in Latin America, people are drinking the same things, wearing the same clothes, eating in the same restaurants, talking on the same phones, driving the same cars and watching the same television shows. Every year we are becoming more and more of a truly global society.

Q: You mentioned in one of your articles that marketing and psychology are closely related—calling it the "Halo effect." Is marketing all about psychological tricks?

Ries: Marketing is psychology in practice. Everything you do in marketing should be done with an eye on the psychology principles involved. The halo effect is just one of those principles.

Marketing Rx is hosting Al Ries and his marketing advice column until June 30. If you have any questions for us or for Al Ries, send them to us at Marketing@inquirer.net or text us at 09179-204-2412. God bless!

Only one number to remember to order pizza

PHONE NUMBERS ARE SOMEtimes the easiest to recall but of sometimes, also the easiest to forget. In the competitive food delivery industry, each company battles for recognition and recall.

Research on the learning curve show that more than half the information received can be lost within five minutes, after an hour, two thirds is lost, and almost 90 percent is lost after a day has passed. This has grown so alarming that companies have turned to psychological studies to reverse the pattern.

Studies have proven that the best way to reverse the learning curve is by increasing the number of information. Which is exactly what Shakey's has done.

Answering with relevant, giant PLUS to give the country its first one-digit delivery number: 7-7-7-7-7, Shakey's has made life easier for its delivery guests—only five numbers to remember, and it's all the same digit! Unlike other delivery numbers, the 77777 number is applicable to both landline phones, too. Shakey's chains have been expanding for its easier number to remember when ordering by telephone.

Shakey's is the first company in the food industry to come up with the bold delivery order promise with its "If it's late, it's FREE" campaign, which guarantees guests—not just the pizza ordered will be free of charge, but every food product ordered!

The new delivery number can be used for account inquiries as well.

77777
Our NEW DELIVERY HOTLINE
If it's late, it's FREE

Foreign retirees and the Filipino farmer

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

LAST MAY 30, RETIREMENT INCOME AWARE-ness/ flagship program, with Edgardo Aglipay heading the program as "retirement czar."

Officials believe that, by uncovering the targeted 900,000 foreign retirements to the country over the next 10 years, around 6 million jobs will be generated, while governments may expect $449 billion to go its coffers.

COMMENTARY The program will also coincide the prevailing migration trend, allowing many Filipino health workers to come home or may not.

But what does this have to do with the Filipino farmer?

Declining pensions

Health Care Coalition president David Stevens, a senior consultant of the Commission on Aging at the White House in the United States, discovered that the declining pensions of retirees in most developed countries will not be sufficient for them to live comfortably in their home countries. They will therefore be a "tsunami" of retirees leaving the developed countries for less expensive retirement destinations.

Philippine Retirement Incorporated (PRI), the private sector counterpart of the government's Philippine Retirement Authority (PRA), did an analysis of retirees in six selected countries shown below:

Country	2006	2015
Japan	83.458	84.258
Korea	15.7	21.0
Taiwan	7.6	8.7
USA	113.0	130.0
Europe	150.0	158.1
China	287.4	320.3
TOTAL	195.9	868.6

The government's minimum target of 900,000 retirees by 2015, represents less than 1/10 of 1 percent (or less than 1 in 1,000) of the number of retirees in the selected markets above.

PRA and PRI

Over the last 30 years, PRA registered only 12,500 retirees, while Malaysia and Thailand each have exceeded that number in only one year. Two reasons have been given for this.

The first is that PRA has not been given the important and required necessary to fulfill its potential. Now that retirement has become a presidential flagship program, this issue is being addressed.

The second reason is that the private sector economic industry players have been underutilized on this. PRI, a non-stock non-profit corporation, now enlists registered operators of retirement facilities, leisure and resort developers, condominium and housing developers, hospitals, health institutes, hospital and travel services, caregiving, training schools, HMOs, financial institutions, training advisories, brokers, builders, health and wellness organizations, and other service providers nationwide, under one organization.

In the housing industry among the key sources behind the PRI formation are Ge Xe-hel de Ayalas, Consunanos, Gokongwein, Yao, and Sies.

Other players

Where talking of retirement, a "retirement village" comes to mind. This is where an enclave of houses and buildings are constructed with support facilities, such as swimming pools, gymnasiums, walking trails, spas, and other amenities. Filipino and big developers may play a significant role in this.

But according to PRI vice chair Francisco Colayco, the majority of retirees in developed countries live in small less integrated arrangements, such as small buildings and residential houses.

PRA Chair Aglipay relates his own condition's experience in the United States. Though an engineer, Jovee Aglipay studied caregiving and trained with two retirees in his own home. He now has two more homes with four retirees each.

Last year each home in Las Vegas. It fetched four retirees each paying $1,500, for a monthly total of $24,000, or approximately P936,000. Like all other registered nursing homes, it follows strict standards set by the US government to ensure the quality of service.

For the facilities here to be globally competitive, the PRI, together with PRA, will ensure that these same standards are implemented.

In fact, we expect our retirement offerings to be superior to others because of the Filipino's caring, compassionate, and professional attitude. We are known to almost every part of the world for this, and no other nationality comes close to us.

Examples of this compassion and professionalism are the maid who put herself in front of a speeding car and was killed trying to protect the child under her care in Hong Kong, and the practice of many Middle East men-nurses who nurture their house boys only to their Filipino employees.

The Filipino farmer

Aglipay said that his vision was for a market to augment his or her income by

Banks' loan portfolio up 1.3% in Apr

Lending activity said to be subdued due to sluggish demand for credit

By Doris C. Dumlao

TETANGCO

COMMERCIAL BANK LENDING EXPANDED in April with a 1.3 percent growth in loan portfolio to P1.56 trillion over a year ago—a turnaround from the 0.5 percent contraction seen in the previous month.

Despite limited lending activity, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday announced that, on a month-on-month basis, bank lending also grew by 1.3 percent in April—an uptick from the 1.0 percent decline in the previous month.

"Overall commercial bank lending activity remains subdued given the sluggish demand for funds by firms and the continued cautious lending stance of banks, aimed at reducing their non-performing assets," Tetangco said.

"Nevertheless, commercial bank lending is expected to continue to rise at a gradual pace as banks continue to see improvements in asset quality."

Loan growth in April came from the following sectors: financial intermediation, real estate and business services (3.6 percent); agriculture, fisheries and forestry (0.9 percent); community, social and personal services sector (0.3 percent); mining and quarrying (2.8 percent); and electricity, gas and water (0.4 percent).

Those had offset the declines in outstanding loans in the following sectors: construction (-20.2 percent); wholesale and retail trade (-12.2 percent); transportation, storage, and communication (-9.3 percent); and manufacturing (-2.2 percent).

Arthur Ty, president of the country's biggest bank, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., said that the banks in general are still reeling from the massive loans that had piled up since the Asian currency crisis.

"It said the sluggish bank lending was not all due to lack of interest in lend-

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Fed's dilemma: Prices climb as growth slows

In US, high energy cost pushed up prices in manufacturing, retail in Q2

IN THE UNITED STATES, ECONOMIC GROWTH in the last month and a half was generally strong, even though there were "some signs of deceleration," the Federal Reserve said in a report on Wednesday.

But prices in most regions rose, according to the report, known as the Beige Book.

With a decision on setting interest rates two weeks away, the report underscores the two issues competing for the Fed's attention: fighting inflation and softening economic growth.

Remarks in recent weeks by Fed chairman Ben S. Bernanke and other officials have made clear that their primary concern is fighting inflation.

That point was reaffirmed Wednesday when the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Richard W. Fisher, called current inflationary pressures corrosive and disconcerting.

Susan Schmidt Bies, a Fed governor, made similar remarks on Wednesday.

In its Beige Book report, which it releases eight times a year, the Fed said high energy costs had pushed up prices in manufacturing and, to a lesser extent, retail firms said April to early June.

Reports of those costs being passed along to the consumer varied, but were more prevalent now than earlier in the year.

"I think the Beige Book was a pretty faithful mirror on what we pretty much already know, which is that economy is showing a bit, but it's not nearly enough to stop the pressures of inflation," said Ethan Harris, chief US economist for Lehman Brothers. "It's a milder version of stagflation."

The report said consumer spending continued to increase, but showed signs of moderating. It said gas prices had put pressure on spending but noted that "rising interest rates were a concern" in some districts.

The report painted a mixed picture of how far inflation was spreading down the supply chain.

It noted that manufacturers had seen higher prices for concrete, steel, copper and natural gas, causing them to increase their own prices.

"Few reports indicated that these increases were reaching the retail level."

Still, the report said, retailers had been able to raise prices in the Boston, Dallas and Philadelphia areas.

In many parts of the country, the Fed said, employers reported that they were facing a shortage of skilled workers.

Truck drivers, engineers, oil and gas workers and financial analysts were all difficult to find.

The report also noted that existing home sales and construction had slowed.

New York Times News Service

MRL earmarks P634M for gold, copper explorations in RP

By Christine A. Gaylican

MINING FIRM MRL GOLD PHILIPPINES INC. will set aside P634 million in capital expenditure for its mining exploration projects in the country over the next two years, a ranking company official said.

According to MRL Gold Philippines president J. A. Climie, the company hopes to advance the exploration of 10 mining projects in the country—the Antonquil, Lutoc and Cale copper-gold exploration projects in Surigao; the Pan de Azucar copper-gold exploration project in the de Azucar Island and Panay Island; the Agata, Tapian San Francisco, Tapian Main and Mat-I copper-gold exploration project in Surigao del Sur and in Agusan del Sur in Mindanao.

MRL is the Philippine operating company of Meridian Resources Ltd., a firm listed in the TSX Venture Exchange in Canada. The local subsidiary mainly is into gold and copper exploration.

"There have been good prospects with our exploration in what we call the Far North Drilling in Batangas," Climie told the business in an interview. "We found encouraging gold mineralization in the area, including bonanza-grade vein."

In the first quarter, Climie said that the company also made a significant find, uncovering a porphyry copper-gold prospect, called the Columbia, in its 24,000-hectare exploration area in Batangas.

"The Columbia prospect is quite near Phelps Dodge Inc.'s Tapian drilling site, where there are large clusters of porphyry copper-gold deposits," he said. "It is a potential drilling site."

The mining company recently forged a joint venture with listed Australian mining company Mertons Mining Ltd.'s local subsidiary Philsaga Mining Corp. to undertake the projects.

In the agreement, Mertons Mining will stake in no less than P300,000 over the next three years for MRL Gold's projects in the country.

The Mertons will also have a 70-percent take in the first 500 tons of ore produced from its narrow vein deposits and in its related porphyry copper-gold deposits.

Foreign ...

From page B1

taking care of one or two foreign retirees in his or her home. The retirees will likewise benefit, not only from lower costs, but also from the comprehensive care they would receive from their Filipino hosts—something the retirees might not get in their home countries.

For a successful retirement industry, two areas that require strict global compliance are health care services and facilities. It is in these areas where farmers play an important role. They can provide the high quality food needed by the retirees.

In addition, model farmers can likewise house retirees. There are many retiree farmers in developed countries looking for retirement destinations. These farmers prefer a farming environment. They can also live more productive and fulfilling lives by sharing their agricultural technology and expertise with Filipino farmers.

The Mimosa Agricultura has already recommended the creation of a special window to attract foreign farmer retirees.

This and other opportunities will be discussed in a PEI-PIA Retirement Industry and Investment Summit to be held on July 5 to the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. For more information, please call Ethel Ruth at 848-3411 to 16 local 339.

(The author is Agribusiness chair, former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriconsult_ph@yahoo.com or telefax 8521133.)

Benpres, MPC talks may not push through

Negotiations to acquire stake in MNTC drag on, MVP says

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PLANS OF METRO PACIFIC Corp. to acquire the 49-percent stake held by Benpres Holdings Corp. in a toll road operator may not push through as the local arm of the Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd. has started looking at other opportunities in power generation and toll road construction.

MPIC chair Manuel V. Pangilinan said in a briefing yesterday that negotiations with the Lopez Group for a substantial stake in the Manila North Tollways Corp., the operator of the 80-kilometer North Luzon Expressway, have dragged on for more than a year and "have not made any significant progress."

"We would be patient, but we can't wait forever. We have the option to look at other opportunities because these discussions have been going on for a year. It would be more prudent for Metro to look at other opportunities," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan stressed, however, that MPIC was not running to back on negotiations with the Lopezes, but said that MPIC would consider other offers on the table.

An agreement with the Lopezes—who own Benpres and First Holdings Corp., both shareholders of the toll road operator—may lead to another deal with MNTC's foreign shareholders, French firm Egis and Australian firm Leighton Asia who were looking to sell their combined 25 percent to MPIC.

Benpres owns 49 percent of First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp. (FPIDC), which in turn owns 62 percent of MNTC.

The remaining 51 percent in FPIDC is owned by Benpres' sister firm First Philippine Holdings Corp.

Pangilinan also said earlier that MPIC wanted to increase its investment in Skyway, Metro Manila's overhead highway to the south, but an Indonesian group that controlled the Skyway could not decide if it wanted to sustain control or sell.

Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp., a joint venture between Indonesian firm PT. Citra Lamtoro Gung Persada and PNCC, currently the Skyway.

MPIC has a 30-percent stake in the company and has offered to take control from the Indonesians.

The 9.3-kilometer Skyway runs from the Magallanes cloverleaf in Makati City to Alabang, and can be extended by another six to seven kilometers to Bicutan.

Pangilinan had said that before MPIC could offer to extend the Skyway from Bicutan to Alabang town in Metro Manila, South Luzon Expressway has to be developed first all the way to Calamba town, outside Metro Manila.

MPIC shareholders yesterday approved the company plan to make investments within and outside of the property sector.

Life is complicated enough.
Your bank shouldn't be.

WESM goes operational ahead of time

By Abigail L. Ho

THE WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY SPOT MARKET (WESM) will begin full operations on June 23, ahead of the July 1 schedule, following the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the department's regulatory filings.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself announced the early start of WESM's operation during yesterday's ceremony for the Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp.'s Upper Mahiao geothermal plant.

"The ERC chairman informed us that they have approved all of the requirements necessary for the commercial operation of the WESM, which include the price determination methodology, the administered price and the market fees," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla told reporters yesterday. "The President instructed that since we are now ready, then we should go for June 23. We need not wait for a later date."

Lotilla said the operation of the WESM would not only pave the way for a more transparent mechanism for buying and selling power, but would also enable the determination of the market price—the basis for determining the systemwide charge for wholesale power.

This, he said, would allow the refinancing of such costs over a longer period of time, effectively resulting in lower rates for consumers.

In a related development, the ERC, Department of Energy and WESM operator Philippine Electricity Market Corp. have established a tripartite committee that would institute "mitigation measures" for WESM.

Lotilla said the committee's main goal was to adopt an initial bid cap or price offer ceiling at the electricity bourse to limit possible instances of excessive increases in market prices.

"The tripartite committee will address market price contingencies that may arise during the initial operations of the WESM, when institutional mechanisms to address these contingencies are still untested," he said.

"These contingencies, though remote, may include excessive increases in market prices. The committee is, therefore, expected to apply prerequisite measures as needed during the early stages of the WESM."

Ultimately, he said the tripartite committee was formed to safeguard consumers against excessive price volatilities, which could occur during the first few months of the WESM's operations.

"While we do not expect extreme price volatility in the first year of market operations, it is prudent to be cautious," PEMC president Lance Bokingkito said.

13 Mindanao projects worth ₱1.58B get perks

Cagayan de Oro leg of BOI roadshow attracts SMEs

By Roumel N. Dionisio

AVILA

THIRTEEN PROJECTS in northern Mindanao worth P1.58 billion were granted tax holidays and other perks during the Cagayan de Oro City leg of an ongoing Board of Investments roadshow.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila, who is also BOI chair, said the event held May 23-26 catered to applicants qualified for the agency's simplified registration process or the so-called one-day registration system.

Favila said the listed projects include the P502-million new bed mill plant of San Miguel Corp.'s Steel Division; the P500-million steel billet and steel bars project of Eloquen Chemical Corp. and the P249-million mass housing project of Cebu-based Land Corp.

Also, the trade chief said the two-day activity represented the second leg of BOI's program to reach out to micro and small-sized enterprises.

Most of these SMEs are not familiar with available incentives from the agency or do not have the means to go to BOI's offices.

Micro and small projects that were listed include Serba Television Inc.'s P19-million cell tower; San Q Technical Trading Co.'s P5-million venture in the export of dried mango and other fruits products; and Mackdel Trading's P1.8-million venture in processed fish.

The 13 approved projects are expected to create 1,044 jobs once they start operations.

"The roadshow is meant to hasten business activity in the country by encouraging formation of Unions, small and medium-sized enterprises) to the export," Favila said.

"We are very much encouraged by the turnout of businessmen from Region 10 (which covers the provinces of Bukidnon, Camiguin, Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental and Lanao del Norte)," he added.

In an earlier interview, BOI managing head Elmer C. Hernandez said many small projects would have been unviable without tax perks and other fiscal and nonfiscal incentives.

Avila said the outreach program had shown that a lot of businessmen are being generated in the regions and that three years ago, no such outreach government services were accessible to businesses.

BOI data showed that in 2005, Region 10 chalked up P1.77 billion worth of investments or 1.09 percent of the total P163.08 billion BOI approvals.

The first leg of the outreach program for micro and small businesses was held in early May in Cotabato, Isabela, where 12 projects worth a total of about P140 million were registered.

According to Hernandez, it was now the time for BOI to gear its efforts toward investment promotion in the provinces since the systems for attracting foreign investments into the country was well in place.

He added that certain requirements were relaxed to allow micro and small-sized businesses to qualify for fiscal incentives, which include tax holidays and duty-free importation of capital equipment.

The government clarifies businesses with assets worth up to P3 million as micro enterprises and those with between P3 million and P15 million as small.

HIGH FOR SALE. Traders prepare some of the fish to be sold at the Tanggol boat landing in Cebu Mactan, Mandaue (see Chart). At least 20 boats cross the Rio Grande de Mindanao every day to transport goods and passengers to and from Tanggol. The facility was built by the USAID-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) Program under its Community Infrastructure Program (CIP). The GEM Program is being implemented under the supervision of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo).

IPO seizes ₱50M in fake products, cites cooperation with Customs

THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY Office has seized P50-million worth of fake high-end products in cooperation with the Bureau of Customs.

IPO Director General Adriano E. Ermita III yesterday said the haul included shoes, bags, wearing apparels, school supplies, jewelry items and watches with Lacoste, Adidas, Fila, Reebok, Puma, Ralph Lauren, Nokia, Nike and Swatch brands.

IPO said the goods were seized from the warehouses of BAN Properties Management Corp. and BAN Distribution Network Inc. along A. Rivera Street in Pasay, Manila.

Ermita said the raid was a result of close cooperation with the Bureau of Customs, where the IPO has set up an embedded unit, as well as the reactivated Task Force on Anti-Smuggling.

Ermita said the IPO and the BOC had agreed to ink a pact relative to mapping out the roles of each agency in complementing each other's efforts as well as holding training for customs agents, especially in detecting and identifying genuine products from fakes, principally through their marks and other distinctive features.

He said the two agencies were also to talk about the possible sharing of each other's database to effect stricter monitoring of counterfeit products, especially those coming in from abroad.

For her, Ermita said the IPO was set to enter into an agreement with the National Telecommunications Commission to cooperate on fighting piracy in the broadcast industry.

Ermita said said efforts to curb violation of intellectual property rights would be stepped up as a results observed the government would raise some P1.5 billion in tax revenues from reduced software piracy alone.

Citing industry data, the IPO chief said the country's industries in manufacturing sector, which accounts for at least $1 billion in revenues last year, could nearly double in the next three years if software piracy was reduced by a tenth from the current level.

Ermita said the IPO was driving home effort to show that achievements in protecting IP rights would translate to economic and social benefits. Reported W. Borreinga

MVP wants control of paper

By Dante L. Lucas

TELECOMMUNICATIONS MOgul Manuel V. Pangilinan wants to acquire 100 percent of Business-World Publishing Corp., having recently screened an initial 20 percent stake in the firm which paints the country's oldest business newspaper.

Ina Inting, Pangilinan and Businessworld's employees, who own the remaining 60 percent of the firm, must decide whether they would hold on to their shares or "cash out now" and sell them to him.

"This is something they will have to agree on," he said, although he did not indicate valuation he had already made a formal offer to the publishing firm's employees.

The company's by-laws allow the company's retirement fund—which owns two-thirds of the firm—to sell its shares to an external investor only with a unanimous vote, or a safeguard against from the takeover attempt.

Stated on the price he agreed to pay for a third of the company, Pangilinan will need to shell out another P66 million to P85 million for complete control of the publishing firm.

At the same time, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. chair said he expected the deal on his initial foray into fourth-estate world to be sealed "within two months."

He revealed that he paid "between P50 million and P60 million" for a 20-percent stake in the firm, subsidy he bought from businessman Hijo Ziobel.

Ziobel, son of the late businessman magnate Enrique Ziobel, is the chair and the single biggest shareholder of BusinessWorld.

He holds three board seats.

DOTC orders toll operator to replace defective e-passes

THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT wants the Toll Regulatory Board and the operator of the southbound Skyway system to reimburse buyers of defective electronic tags, which are supposed to facilitate travel along the elevated highway.

The Department of Transportation and Communications made this statement after receiving complaints from motorists about the "poor quality" of e-pass units allegedly being sold by Citra Metro Manila Tollway Corp., the private firm which operates the high-speed toll road.

"DOTC has received numerous complaints from e-pass users about the declining performance after being used only for several months," DOTC Assistant Secretary Roberto R. Catanduanes said in a statement.

He added that motorists have also complained about "unreasonable delays" in the replacement of defective e-passes.

"We believe Citra should replace the defective e-passes for free or with large discounts because the motorists had no choice when they bought them, Citra being a virtual monopoly," said Catanduanes, who also heads the Department's Presidential Action Office.

The e-pass is an electronic transponder popular with motorists who live in the southern part of Metro Manila.

Attached to the windshield, the transponder allows them to drive through designated express lanes, with the toll fee automatically deducted from their accounts.

It costs P2,200, and must be reloaded periodically by buying additional credits or through automated teller machines, depending on motorists' frequency and distance of travel along the Skyway.

Catanduanes explained that the defective e-passes also aggravate traffic in the entry and exit points of the Skyway, causing inconveniences to motorists, especially during rush hours.

Catanduanes urged motorists with defective e-passes to file their complaints with the transportation department by calling DOTC Secretary Leandro Mendoza directly or by calling the DOTC Action Center hotline at 1800.

Dante L. Lucas

Mirant to provide electricity to 170 barangays by end-2006

By Abigail L. Ho

MIRANT PHILIPPINES CORP. AIMS TO COMplete the electrification of at least 170 remote barangays in various parts of the country by the end of the year.

"We are simultaneously working on the electrification of several barangays in some of the remotest parts of the country," said Mirant Philippines chief executive officer Jose Lorenzo Alba.

"We are actively pursuing these projects to help the Philippine government bring the benefits of electricity to our people and hasten the development of their communities," Lorenzo added.

He said providing electricity to these remote barangays would help jumpstart economic activities in the areas and lead to better lives for their residents.

The company's barangay electrification is being done in partnership with the Department of Energy, as part of the government's program to achieve full barangay electrification by 2008.

The 170 barangays that Mirant aims to give electricity to by the end of the year is part of the additional 500 barangays that is earmarked to electrify from 2005 to 2008.

Mirant last year provided electricity to 147 barangays, 131 of which were in Mindanao, 11 in Luzon, and three in the Visayas.

Of the 170 barangays to be energized this year, 100 will be in Mindanao, 50 in Luzon, and 20 in the Visayas.

The barangay electrification program is under Mirant Philippines' flagship corporate social responsibility program Barangay Electrification Assistance for Countryside Development Project, known as the energized more than 1,800 barangays from 2001 to 2004 in 33 provinces.

The company has invested some P1 billion for the program, putting up around 1,000 kilometers of distribution lines in different energized barangays all over the country.

THE Asian Development Bank extended a grant worth $50,000 to help clean the town market's waste.

Treatment plant helps town rid of pollution

ADB-funded facility cleans wastewater

By Irene R. Sino-Cruz
PhilSingson Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—A FEW MONTHS AFTER the completion of the wastewater treatment plant here, the seawater at the back of the municipality's public market has turned from murky to clear.

Time was when the residents at the back of the market had to live with the foul odor coming from the untreated wastewater and solid waste discharged by a pipe.

Today, the treated wastewater discharged into the sea is clear and free of debris, and only a faint odor can be detected.

The issue about polluted seawaters off Lilo-an was first raised by a local journalist who used a tarnished garden as the canvas. Mayor Gloria R. Severilla said in a recent briefing here.

Severilla said later tests on the seawater revealed that the pollution came from the discharge pipe at the back of the market, and not from the drainage pipe from the memorial garden.

While she was angry when the story about pollution came out, the mayor said it had benefitted Lilo-an since the problem caught the attention of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and its in-house expert Ambrosio Konig.

Konig noted that tests conducted on the seawater taken from the discharge point before the wastewater treatment plant was put up showed that the seawater quality in the area was deteriorating.

Konig said this was due to the untreated wastewater from the public market being discharged directly to the sea.

The installation of a treatment plant was deemed the best solution, and with a $50,000 grant from the Asian Development Bank, the project was implemented in March 2004 and inaugurated November last year.

About $45,000 was spent for the facility while the balance financed the social preparation of the community and the testing conducted on the seawater, he said.

The project includes the construction of the facility, which has a capacity to treat 80 cubic meters of wastewater a day, and the construction of the market toilets.

Tests conducted last January 2006 found that the fecal coliform went down from nine million per 100 ml to only 2,300 per 100 ml, he said.

The DENR conducted a series of meetings with the market vendors to convince them of the need to implement the project.

The market vendors were told that they, along with the public toilets at the market, were the major source of wastewater, which came from vegetables, fruits, fish and meat.

Justina Ilustre, project consultant, noted that there was minimal resistance from the residents in the area.

They realized that the facility would help address their sanitation problem.

The Lilo-an Community Multi-purpose Cooperative, a spin-off from the Market Vendor Association, will take over the operation and maintenance of the facility, which is owned by the municipality of Lilo-an.

Under the memorandum of agreement, the municipality allows the cooperative to collect fees for the use of the renovated public toilet and the maintenance of the wastewater facility.

But the Lilo-an municipal government has the right to rescind the agreement if the cooperative will violate the terms of the agreement even after three written reminders.

The members of the cooperative have agreed to pay a daily fee of P5 for the maintenance of the wastewater facility, Konig said.

Highlands ... From page B1

opment inside the enclosure. Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands complex.

Designed with family-oriented golfers in mind, The Horizon will have several golfing and leisure amenities.

Construction of The Horizon's first six (out of 12) holes, tee it near to fall swing and is scheduled for completion by July this year. All fourteen units come in four bedrooms with an approximate floor area of 140 square meters.

Another major project, dubbed The Woodridge Park, undergoing P700 to P800 million. It will include two to four-bedroom units, approximately 170 to 200 square meters, a four lot units, clubhouse, high ceilings and fireplaces for premium units.

The project is focused to generate P3.6 billion in revenues for 139 units. The first phase involving 65 units of The Woodridge Park is targeted for completion by the end of 2007.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Construction Management (CM) Consultancy Services for the BSP Branch Building at Davao City

1. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) intends to construct a new branch building at Davao City and has allocated the amount of Two Hundred Million Pesos (P200,000,000.00) for the project. The BSP now invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Construction Management (CM) Consultancy Services for the BSP Branch Building at Davao City.

2. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through the Bids and Awards Committee, now invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Construction Management (CM) Consultancy Services for the BSP Branch Building at Davao City.

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BUSINESS

Ranks of unemployed swelled to 2.93M in April

By Lala B. Sidayon
and Doris C. Dumlao

THREE AND NOW 2.93 MILLION (THEIR) plowed people in the country as of April 2006 – an increase from the 2.92 million recorded in the same period last year, according to the National Statistics Office.

With the 0.7-percent increase in the number of unemployed, the country's unemployment rate had inched up to 8.2 percent in April against the 8.1 percent rate in January as fresh college graduates joined the labor force, the NSO yesterday, citing the preliminary results of its latest Philippine Labor Force Survey.

The NSO, which conducts its labor force survey four times a year, defines "unemployed" as those over 15 years old who are without work and are currently looking for work."

But according to the Department of Labor and Employment, the 8.2 percent unemployment rate was lower than the 8.3 percent registered in the same period last year.

Also, the NSO reported an increase in employment as of April 2006.

Officials said employment grew 2.3 percent, which translates to 893,000 additional jobs.

This brings the total employment in the country to 33.004 million, according to DOLE Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas.

The NSO also said that the underemployment rate has likewise gone down to 20.4 percent or 6.981 million in April 2006 from 20.1 percent or 6.421 million in the same period last year.

The total labor force as of April 2006 was pegged at 36 million, or 64.9 percent of the 55.4 million people aged 15 and above.

The rest of the segment of the population who are not part of the labor force are housewives, students, disabled or retired people. Majority or 73.4 percent, of them are female.

The NSO also reported that the number of salaried workers totaled 16.7 million, while the number of own-account workers was pegged at 12.4 million. Another 2.9 million are unpaid family workers.

Despite the increase in employment, the NSO also reported that full-time employment, or those who work for 40 hours and over a week, went down to 18.7 million in April 2006 from the 20.1 million in the same period last year.

Part-time workers, or those who work less than 40 hours a week, increased by 2 million, or to 12.2 million from 11.2 million last year.

PLDT DSL

In Celebration of "Filipino Chinese Friendship Day", We invite all Golfers to join

「中菲友誼盃」高爾夫球邀請賽
"FILIPINO-CHINESE FRIENDSHIP DAY" CUP
FILIPINO-CHINESE INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

「中菲友誼盃」女子菲華高爾夫球邀請賽
"FILIPINO-CHINESE FRIENDSHIP DAY" CUP
FILIPINO-CHINESE LADIES INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

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Kelly Misa, Olivia Francisco and Juliana Revilla eagerly played 'stage daughters' to create new looks for their dads

TO CELEBRATE FATHER'S Day, boysenas fashion and Store Specialines Inc. asked three teens ride daddy's girls and their loving dads to participate in a special fashion makeover. Tables were turned as Kelly Misa, Olivia Francisco and Juliana Revilla eagerly played "stage daughters" to recreate-but-walking dads Roberto, Lito and Johnny, respectively.

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

With the help of runner stylist and former Cosmopolitan Magazine fashion editor and former associate fashion editor of Summit Media Inc., Donna Cano-Pita, the three daughters created new looks for their dads.

The makeover makeup was a huge success, as you can see from the before and after photos. But what really made the whole exercise a coup was not just the new and improved, hippier, younger looking dads.

It was the fact that the makeovers was really more about daughters bonding and having a grand old time.

Turn to page C2 and read on about our fashion-savvy dads' and daughters' candid thoughts on makeovers, fashion philosophies and even babies by advice.

E-mail the author at aplabaw@inquirer.com.ph

Dandy dad

Stylist and fashion authority Donna Cano-Pita shares some easy tips for daughters who want to instantly update Daddy's look:

- Change is in the details. Loosen up the tucked in shirt, wear the pants a bit lower on the waist, roses up those folded sleeves. These small changes will instantly make your dad look more cool and hip.
- Encourage him to try the latest "in" cut you might not be ready for the ultra fit look yet, but he can certainly try out those undershirt-colored sports shirts and stripped line polos. As with most men over people. Dad would most probably have a fun time for dressing up. Introduce him to the fashion and attract.
- Stay true to his fashion personality. If your dad is a no-frills or an earthier fashion? Knowing his personality will guide you in making suggestions that he would welcome. For accessories dad gets likes to stick to basics in patterned ties, a pair of sleek flat front trousers can appeared to his present pants) accent metal wingtip shoes or boots, say, ultra-new jeans.
- Buy a brilliant and accessories for him. Don't wait for him to spend our money for a shirt you know will look great on him. Sell it yourself and don't mind probable, when it comes close to the gate, and never wait for because he doesn't, but because his successor. Who got it for him.
- Frame him when he experiments with his look. Let Daddy know how great he looks when he compliments the first few fashions of his sporty shirt. Compliment him when he shaves for a new 'do' salmon-pink. It's not pinky shirt you got him for Christmas. Encourage your dad to ease into fashion and always remind him that, high waist is low-waist, in your eyes, he will forever be the best-looking guy on the whole world!

The daddy makeovers

The Revillas

Name: Johnny Revilla
Age: 34
Occupation: Businessman, restaurateur

Fashion philosophy: I'm basically a jeans and T-shirt kind of a guy. I love comfortable clothes. I'm not too much into other's bilo or in.

Dr. Jellmar's picks: I loved the Hugo Boss shirt very much and liked the whole shoes look. I guess I'm blessed since I still can get away with wearing funky stuff and not look like I'm trying too hard.

Makeover experience: It was fun. Anything we ran do together always makes me feel good. The choices were nice. She's got good taste. She got that from her mother.

Thoughts on fatherhood: When my father used to discipline me, he kept telling me, "This will hurt me more than it will hurt you!" I always thought he was nuts, until I became a father also. It does hurt more when you're a first-time training children is quite difficult and many times painful, especially when you have to do what's perceived to be best for them. But reaching goals are more joy as three maturity children.

Name: Juliana Roberta Revilla
Age: 33 (in July)
Occupation: Student

Rad's basic wardrobe: Simple. He loves his jeans. But find always dresses well when he has to. Rad really doesn't fol low any style.

Makeover experience: It was fun. I was laughing the whole time.

Rad's new look: I wanted to see my dad looking more hip. I think we achieved that.

Special moments: Any moment I share with my dad is special. He always cooks for us on Sundays and that's very special to all of us. I love helping him cook and we enjoy his food so much. I love it when he just hangs out. He's Dad, what else can I say?

The Misas

Name: Roberto Misa
Age: 51
Occupation: CEO of an orthopedic company

Fashion philosophy: My mom years wears the '70s. Shirts, as it is now, anything goes! Like my choice of music, I give everyone carte blanche for self-expression and pick out what suits my mood. Appreciation of fashion is one thing and buying clothes for myself is another. At 51 years older, I tend to choose to fit color, or CEO, as a country club bum, or a sports enthusiast, as a man in middle crisis, etc.

Dr. Kelly's picks: Kelly picked out clothes that were casual and colorful. When he first saw the clothes, I had my doubts that they would work out together. But in my surprise, they did blend nicely and they also made his look distinct and younger.

Words of wisdom: I was stumped with the philosophy of fashion but philosophy on fatherhood comes very easily to me. Our children are our cues. They belong as three selves. They do not live for us or we for them. Parents should teach their children to love themselves, and we should support their ambitions and dreams.

Name: Kelly Misa
Age: 24
Occupation: Model, host

Rad's basic style: My dad's pretty conservative when it comes to dressing up, especially when it comes to choosing the color style and fit of his clothes. He would usually be seen wearing a polo shirt and slacks in "safe" colors (white, black, brown and blue), and occasionally he would wear stripes, but he wouldn't be caught in anything that would really stand out. His style of dressing suits him, though, and I think is to protect for the line of work he is in, especially since he has to meet with many clients within a day.

Makeover experience: It was fun and weird to actually be in a shoot with my dad for the very first time. Only because I still remember laughing at him as his shoes were hard when he still modeled, and I would be awestruck with the whole experience. Now that I model for a living, the shoot made me feel like a kid again. At the same time, it was a lot of fun to see my dad in clothes I had chosen. He didn't look bad at all.

Cherished memories: My dad has always driven me to and from school and sometimes some drives for as long as I can remember, and my fondest memories with him were actually when he was driving me somewhere. I like it because there's nothing else to do but talk, and that's probably when we've had our conversations about the funniest, most outrageous and most emotion things.

The Francisco

Name: Lino Francisco
Age: 60
Occupation: VP Treasurer, Philippine Realty and Holdings Corporation

Fashion philosophy: At my age, appearance is my choice of wardrobe is essential. I am no longer the individual who wears clothes just because it's fashionable. I am not out to compete to be seen. I am not a follower of the saying to something "Impress the packaging to impress the product." Most of the time I'm in the corporate world, so I am very comfortable wearing a barong or a shirt and tie. However, when I am with friends, I don't go too much Combos suit.

Makeover experience: I felt some apprehension at stage, but then whole makeover experience was something new. I was not really nervous, but I didn't know what to do or how to react. I was here looked awkward for that new because of inexperience. I enjoyed it, though.

Fashion advice: Well, on hindsight, I maybe we should have done things that we were not able to do because we were too busy working to make a living. I think the most important thing about being a father is spending time with your children. Being there as a much as influence them for to give them the assurance that a helping hand is always available. Sometimes (where) expect their children to achieve things that they themselves failed to achieve. We should keep in mind that our children have their capabilities, and we are not there to offer guidance and moral supports to all their endeavors.

Name: Olivia Francisco
Age: 28
Occupation: Dentist

Makeover experience: It was fun. I've never been in a makeover. I was having a photo shoot with my dad that was over before the shoot, he kept on asking what was going to happen, what the shoot was all about, what it was for. I think I was a pained just dressing your boss. I would get there on my lunch break. I was so excited. It was my turn to be a stage daughter!

Dad's new look: I just wanted to give my dad a fresh look. I think I was successful in doing that. My dad seems to have a lot of confidence in himself now. He looks good in everything!

Dave memories rarely dealt. We didn't very outstanding and very mundane. We used to go out of town once in a while, usually from the village and of my cousin would give me a shower. It's on our last day and he'd crash my wet bed. During another time of some way, he helped me remember his search and many messages while we were on the road. I didn't know how to summarize so that's what I learned how to do it. He's always made sacrifices for me a final grade of 100 when he was in college) and he was so proud of me. He always told me to I would get top grades in every other subject except math! I realized he was a terror when he was teaching in AM, UEM and MMC, but I never took it to self! So, I guess we are just different with me and my siblings.

The daddy makeovers

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Age: 33 (in July)
Occupation: Student

Rad's basic wardrobe: Simple. He loves his jeans. But find always dresses well when he has to. Rad really doesn't fol low any style.

Makeover experience: It was fun. I was laughing the whole time.

Rad's new look: I wanted to see my dad looking more hip. I think we achieved that.

Special moments: Any moment I share with my dad is special. He always cooks for us on Sundays and that's very special to all of us. I love helping him cook and we enjoy his food so much. I love it when he just hangs out. He's Dad, what else can I say?

The Misas

Name: Roberto Misa
Age: 51
Occupation: CEO of an orthopedic company

Fashion philosophy: My mom years wears the '70s. Shirts, as it is now, anything goes! Like my choice of music, I give everyone carte blanche for self-expression and pick out what suits my mood. Appreciation of fashion is one thing and buying clothes for myself is another. At 51 years older, I tend to choose to fit color, or CEO, as a country club bum, or a sports enthusiast, as a man in middle crisis, etc.

Dr. Kelly's picks: Kelly picked out clothes that were casual and colorful. When he first saw the clothes, I had my doubts that they would work out together. But in my surprise, they did blend nicely and they also made his look distinct and younger.

Words of wisdom: I was stumped with the philosophy of fashion but philosophy on fatherhood comes very easily to me. Our children are our cues. They belong as three selves. They do not live for us or we for them. Parents should teach their children to love themselves, and we should support their ambitions and dreams.

Name: Kelly Misa
Age: 24
Occupation: Model, host

Rad's basic style: My dad's pretty conservative when it comes to dressing up, especially when it comes to choosing the color style and fit of his clothes. He would usually be seen wearing a polo shirt and slacks in "safe" colors (white, black, brown and blue), and occasionally he would wear stripes, but he wouldn't be caught in anything that would really stand out. His style of dressing suits him, though, and I think is to protect for the line of work he is in, especially since he has to meet with many clients within a day.

Makeover experience: It was fun and weird to actually be in a shoot with my dad for the very first time. Only because I still remember laughing at him as his shoes were hard when he still modeled, and I would be awestruck with the whole experience. Now that I model for a living, the shoot made me feel like a kid again. At the same time, it was a lot of fun to see my dad in clothes I had chosen. He didn't look bad at all.

Cherished memories: My dad has always driven me to and from school and sometimes some drives for as long as I can remember, and my fondest memories with him were actually when he was driving me somewhere. I like it because there's nothing else to do but talk, and that's probably when we've had our conversations about the funniest, most outrageous and most emotion things.

The Francisco

Name: Lino Francisco
Age: 60
Occupation: VP Treasurer, Philippine Realty and Holdings Corporation

Fashion philosophy: At my age, appearance is my choice of wardrobe is essential. I am no longer the individual who wears clothes just because it's fashionable. I am not out to compete to be seen. I am not a follower of the saying to something "Impress the packaging to impress the product." Most of the time I'm in the corporate world, so I am very comfortable wearing a barong or a shirt and tie. However, when I am with friends, I don't go too much Combos suit.

Makeover experience: I felt some apprehension at stage, but then whole makeover experience was something new. I was not really nervous, but I didn't know what to do or how to react. I was here looked awkward for that new because of inexperience. I enjoyed it, though.

Fashion advice: Well, on hindsight, I maybe we should have done things that we were not able to do because we were too busy working to make a living. I think the most important thing about being a father is spending time with your children. Being there as a much as influence them for to give them the assurance that a helping hand is always available. Sometimes (where) expect their children to achieve things that they themselves failed to achieve. We should keep in mind that our children have their capabilities, and we are not there to offer guidance and moral supports to all their endeavors.

Name: Olivia Francisco
Age: 28
Occupation: Dentist

Makeover experience: It was fun. I've never been in a makeover. I was having a photo shoot with my dad that was over before the shoot, he kept on asking what was going to happen, what the shoot was all about, what it was for. I think I was a pained just dressing your boss. I would get there on my lunch break. I was so excited. It was my turn to be a stage daughter!

Dad's new look: I just wanted to give my dad a fresh look. I think I was successful in doing that. My dad seems to have a lot of confidence in himself now. He looks good in everything!

Dave memories rarely dealt. We didn't very outstanding and very mundane. We used to go out of town once in a while, usually from the village and of my cousin would give me a shower. It's on our last day and he'd crash my wet bed. During another time of some way, he helped me remember his search and many messages while we were on the road. I didn't know how to summarize so that's what I learned how to do it. He's always made sacrifices for me a final grade of 100 when he was in college) and he was so proud of me. He always told me to I would get top grades in every other subject except math! I realized he was a terror when he was teaching in AM, UEM and MMC, but I never took it to self! So, I guess we are just different with me and my siblings.

Happy Father's Day, Dad! I thank God for your love, your wisdom, and your inspiration, and also for the last time you no longer dress like this.

—Joel Trinidad

You inspired me to dream big dreams, you showed me how to love selflessly, you taught me that gentleness always comes with humility. Thanks, dad. You are my hero.

—Rico Blanco

Thanks, Dad, for showing me how to be a sport and how to stand tall in it. Thanks for always being there and never giving up on me when times are hard. I love you. Happy Dad's day to the world's best dad and coach!

—Kenneth Asensio

I wish we could spend more quality time together. Since you are embarking on a new field of creativity, I wish you good health and the determination to succeed.

—Bobby Carreon

Father board

By Don Padilla
Contributor

THEY SAY THAT BECOMING A FATHER IS A BLESSING from God. But, that blessing feels like one cody up until your kid decides to get a nine ring and drop out of school to join a rock band.

The point: Whether blessing or curse, fatherhood is not a temp job but a permanent one. That cute little bundle of joy will one day grow up and perhaps change his name to Stacy.

But on what? That's life and dad's fatherhood. So to all you brave men out there who took a chance, thanks!

Even if they said you as Sandall, you're not old. You have so many more new things to try and achieve. Take your vitamins and watch it do homebrewing. I know I can always find you at JT's anyway. I constantly pray for you.

—Phivos Fabregas

I lost my father a decade ago but for me, that is no reason not to celebrate special days or occasions... Thank you for all the best. I admire you for your principles, for setting a good example when we were growing up and for allowing my innocence when I wanted to. You will forever shine on my inspiration to continuously better myself and my work. I will make sure that I live up to your standards. I miss you dearly.

—Joey Samson

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So, whether you're out for some clubbing or just chilling out with your friends after work, bang some I-ON Energy Drink and unleash each other's energy. With its delicious way of enhancing your stamina, vitality and endurance for every activity, I-ON Energy Drink will definitely boost your energy to the next level!

I-ON Mocha Mina
- shot of gin
- portion of Cointreau Negra
- portion of I-ON Energy Drink
serve in a frosted beer mug

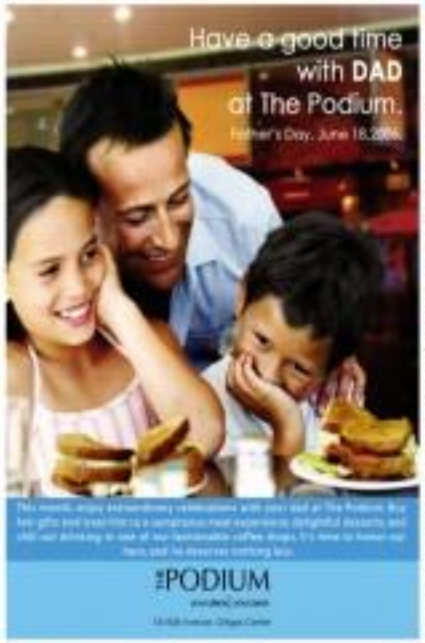
I-ON Mojito Jolt
2 shots of Tanduay Rhum
a portion of Cuba Cabana
a portion of I-ON Energy Drink
serve in a long drink glass with ice

I-ON Lemon Jolly
- portion of Vodka
- portion of I-ON Energy Drink
serve on Jello Shot with a cherry in the middle to give taste

I-ON Pinoy Mango
- portion of San Mig Light Beer
- portion of I-ON Energy Drink
fork a big glass upside down with a fresh shot glass inside when serving

I-ON Pink Martini
- small portion of Grenadine
- portion of Vodka
- portion of I-ON Energy Drink
garnish with cherry and crushed ice when serving

Bring it on. I-ON.



Tic talk

Times image model Piolo Pascual talks about his award-winning role as father to 9-year-old Iñigo

By Gem Padilla
Correspondent

HIS DETERMINED admirers call him Papa Piolo, and he is the ultimate dreamboat in Philippine show business. He can be strong and masculine one moment, heart-breakingly vulnerable the next. His quiet demeanor is arresting both onscreen and in person.

Most show-biz personalities nowadays lack versatility, the common pitfall of being trapped into playing themselves as characters over and over again. Maybe it's both or maybe it's skill, but Piolo has turned out to be an actor more than a star.

He has repeatedly challenged his range with roles in movies like "Sukdulan 'TO,'" "Milan" and "Lagarista." But his accomplishments as an actor, singer and model (see his fourth year cover as the celebrity endorser for Times wardrobe) crested rival his real-life performance as a hands-on dad to his son Iñigo.

Living in a paparazzi bubble is a celebrity parent's nightmare. At this 30-year-old movie star, raising a 9-year-old kid is not an easy task, and having a non-traditional family setup does not make it any easier.

"Fatherhood has definitely made me a more responsible person," says Piolo. "You have to be cautious with your actions. I have a son to think about and he asks questions."

As a consequence of their family situation (Piolo and the mother of his son do not live under the same roof, but are together in raising their son), Piolo has chosen to surround Iñigo with a support system. As a born-again Christian, he believes that a strong Christian community is vital in the upbringing of his child.

"I want him to have a strong faith in God. I'm known what's good because of his religious background, and we try to surround him with people from our Church who can guide him."

Is he a strict dad? "What's good about my son is that he listens," says Piolo. "I don't spank my kid when he does something wrong. I talk to him man-to-man."

Despite his busy schedule, Piolo makes it a point to be actively involved in his son's life, even with hundreds parts like PTA meetings and such. Sundays are sacrosanct. They go to Church and spend the rest of the day in their favorite mall to watch a movie or go bonding. Just that summer Iñigo enrolled in piano, basketball and voice lessons.

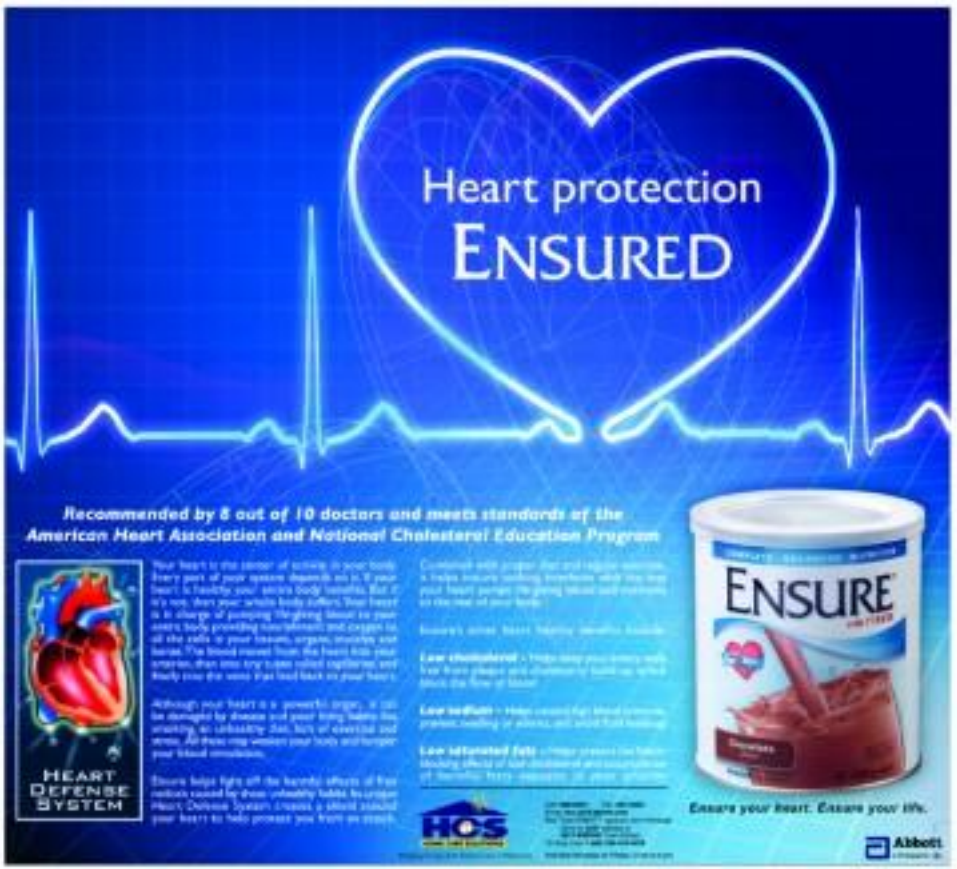
"He's discovering things he wants to do and I encourage him. I'm a supportive dad and I want to be there always when he needs me," says Piolo.

On the subject of Iñigo winning show business, the father's protective side comes out. He says that a good education is what he wants for his son.

"Several talent scouts have asked him already, but he never tells them that. I'm his father. I told him pag-aaralin pa natin maabot nalan mo, aral ka yan ni Piolo Pascual," he says, grinning.

Hmmm... Stage dad to the nth-ing? Only time will tell.

PIOLO with Times leading lady Angel Locsin



LIFESTYLE

FASHION

LOUIS VUITTON

LOVE, TOKYO

JEWELRY designer Cecilia Mindi

CHAIR and CEO of LVMH, Bernard Arnault

PRESIDENT of LVMH Vivo Cornelio and LV Philippines Inc. brand manager Mona De Vera

Forget anime, sushi, Zen, and (dare I say it) Paris for the moment. Tokyo turns ma chic, thanks to the immortal Louis Vuitton

PAIRS. Jacobs arrives at LV's after-show bash

By Joni Eguerson

TOKYO FROM

In the land of Takashi Murakami, imagine cartoon and Gangsta girls. I found myself in a frowing binge, rekindling the inner child in me and falling in love all over again with Marc Jacobs.

The Japanese are the most polite people I've ever encountered. They always greet you with a bow to show how much they respect you and one another.

Japan also has stores with the cutest little, three colorful locks and bags to quicker the signs, many of which exist exclusively to the equally quirky Japanese market, and season

LIFE 11

LOUIS Vuitton A/W 2001 collection

SPOTTED

LOVe, Tokyo

HEAVENLY HEADPHONES: The ultimate must-buy up-for bag

LOUIS VUITTON

From page 31

be found anywhere else.

It is easy to understand why a super brand such as French luxury giant Louis Vuitton chose to hold its first ever full show outside Paris in Japan. This is a nation that is overtly style conscious, no price is too steep, and as always our peepersore or outlandish for one of the world's top markets for luxury goods. Japan is every fashion house's wet dream. And for a crowd-h hungry mob like me, a fantasy come true.

The cool-ection

When began with (then) revolution. any the trunks in 1854 has evolved into a fashion powerhouse, with Hollywood hotshot and catwalk goddesses Li Lu, Naomi Campbell, Uma Thurman and Gisele Bündchen becoming LV suave.

When fashion's "it" boy Marc Jacobs became its creative director in 1997, introducing modern pop and kitsch into the brand's staid image, LV had members to go hot up and hip—with the likes of Sofia Coppola, Pharell Williams and Japan's Ringo Cool, Nigo, joining the fray.

It's a make-shift dome-shaped tent at the Yamamotocho Park, east of the capital, in the presence of beautiful celebrities and models, Marc Jacobs recently unveiled the Louis Vuitton Autumn/Winter 2001 pret a porter collection.

Who would've thought grunge could be cute? Leave it to Jacobs to do just that. He opened the show with a GI mix of Sienna B.'s "The Glamorous Life," then long-haired models wearing oversized furs, fingerless gloves and ski boots strutted down the runway in layered threads and a cool attitude.

The catch phrases for next winter? Comfy chic and grunge glam. Think thick sweater dresses layered over cropped trousers, and wide-leg pea coats in navy, beige, grey and black paired with ski boots and fashion-like slippers. Looks that are sure to be seen on Tokyo's streets faster than you can make origami.

The collections colors were muted, but with a splash of red and leopard print—a tribute to Stephen Sprouse, who created the graffiti and abstract leopard print for LV in 2002. It was a revival that recalled Jacobs' Perry Ellis days, when he became known for a youthful, chill style that showed his devil-may-care mood-color and voluminous silhouettes.

His recent collection still has a bit of his rebel romps, though muted down. With mechanistic robots, pretty punk looks and clutch-all bags, he has turned everything one parents warned us about into lovable hotness—we bet even my mom will love nylon.

As a foodie SA grunge, and, now, syllabicating with zipper and pendants Pharell Williams, Jacobs shapes the collection to reflect his personality. His fondness for disco days and DJ dreams is most apparent in one standout accessory, a golden headphone-handle bag bag.

Yes, the highlight were still the bags, with little inspirations abounding in metallic details such as metallic Medusa and chain motif. Purses, silk and rubber as well as leather mixed with other luxurious materials such as mink and alligator. The monsoon handbag looked like a snakeskin trick-o-white gold—a luxurious that it's only made to order. Translation: only the rich, famous and totally insane can afford it!

After experiencing such voluminous movements in his A/W 2001 collection, Jacob's A/W 2002 is literally in full bloom with oversize hats, iconic shoes and bags.

Mixed in bloom

Speaking of bloom, the press and guests also got a sneak peek of Camille Miceli's latest jewelry collection for Louis Vuitton. Formerly public relations director for Chanel, Miceli was lured to LV where she created the first Fashion Press Office in 1997.

The Monogramme Hoops, Camille's first design back in 2000, were an successful that Jacobs decided to involve her in all the productions and brought her into the studio with him.

In a short time, she became the Marc Jacobs muse and the jewelry designer for the Monogramme Jewelry. Her latest brainchild, the Cocoaette line, is the female version of none other than Louis, as it suggests.

Drawing inspiration from coquette, her kikay own and her family Miceli's line showcased floral designs in gold. The shapes were curvy and more organic, with stones of pink sapphires, rubies and diamonds individually set in a stem to create more luster.

Mixed-metal pieces included the pinky rings and stacked squatish bracelets. Her collection was about contrast. Some big pieces, like floral rings, nevertheless went into pinky rings, could be stacked up to three pieces "to create your own bouquet," said Miceli.

Very Parisian and very chic—so "La Vie en Rose!"

Disco debauchery

There are two things I look forward to in a Louis Vuitton joint: the amazing fashion show, and the party! LV throws the most fun and lavish parties ever, with cool celebrities, mind-blowing champagne and awesome music.

The Tokyo grunge glam fashion show ended well-than Jacobs taking a bow and running his back to join his models. Then, like All Saint's rave, the audio turned and it was time to party!

Classic music ushered in a disco theme/flavor in "Boogie Nights," with non Japanese classics in "Let's Get Physical" artist dancing on roller skates, as host Interview danced to the cool DJ tunes underneath a gargantuan mirror ball (or disc, the biggest one I've seen). And to top off the disco theme, out came Grace Jones singing in French.

Partying the night away over the usual suspects from DC Ji choir Bernard Arnault, LV president Yves Carcelle, soul Camille Miceli and Marc "Yes Rock" Jacobs.

Bruno Philippines, decked out in an Issey and ready to party hard, included LV Philippines brand manager Rhea De Vera, Fashion magazine editor-in-chief Pauline Juan, Mega magazine editor-in-chief Cecile Mial, YSHOT Celine Lopez and star Mahoboy girl, etc.

The coolest part of the night was the fact that Marc Jacobs sat at the "entertainers' table"—Bruno Philippines' couch (he still, say beating Sweet'), with Nigo a couch away. When someone asked if Bathing Ape designer Nigo seemed to be in the VIP area, he said "No!" Hee-hee!

The Vogue Australia person said they looked forward to our "cocktail" everyday, and proof Rhea De Vera attended this the last few hot-dressed praise people.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again. We may be a Third World country, but we can look as cool as Sophia, or at least, we try. Please nick!

Murakami, Marc and me

It's obvious by now that I am a Marc Jacobs fan. As in, I Heart Marc Jacobs. In my dream book, I wrote, "Meet designer Marc Jacobs," and now it has come true. On top of that, we hang out the whole night—well, most of we saw us towards sunset.

His Murakami collection, to us, was the bomb. I love to make a classic-brand look hip? Print graffiti and cartoonish designs like cherries and pink flowers with faces on it. And wow, the bags is now a collector's item.

Like a giddy fan, I asked Mr. Takashi Murakami to sign my LV Murakami pouchette, and he did, with matching drawing.

Judging from his latest collection, Marc Jacobs seems to be in a happy place. Right, as in the brand Louis Vuitton. I've recently signed another 10-year contract with JC he here's to 10 more years of fabulous fashion! Yes magnifique!

E-mail the author at globetrotter@inquirer.com.ph

MARC "You Rock" Jacobs

BAG FOR GOLD: Embossed monogrammed Vernis Alma and Papillon

LEOPARD-PRINT

VUITTON beaded bag

SILVER Vernis Alma

HUMMING mini messenger

HUSTLE shoes

NIGO sunglasses

SUPERSIZE! Jacket G. Inc. and patchwork

IT'S A DISCO WORLD! Bruno mirror ballgliders

"TEAM PHILIPPINES." The author, Carla Sibal, Rhea De Vera, Pauline Juan and Celine Lopez

BATHING Ape designer Nigo

MISS Grace Jones

HUSTLE signing the author's bag

WELCOME TO THE PLEASURE DOME: Fierce dancers and party revelers at Yamamotocho Park

Playland

As offshoot of Greyhound, Playland is for the slim and the decidedly avant-garde guy who values his individuality. So he need not necessarily be coming in years, only young in spirit to get body with it.

Playland, a Thai brand, carries a contemporary range of t-shirt, tops, and playful shirts, pants and leather goods. Its store is located at Greenbelt 3 in Makati.

Traffic

Make your own customized sneakers with shoes from Traffic, which offers a mix of chic, practical and, best of all, affordable footwear for men.

Formal and casual shoes — from moccasins to sneakers — inspired by the latest European and American designs cost from P1,999 (P1,599 a pair). It also carries stylish leather jackets, flip-flops and shirts (with prices starting at P1,999) and polo.

Traffic has branches in Glorietta, Greenbelt, Trinoma, Eastwood, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Ermita, Mall of Asia, Shoemart (SM) Megamall, Power Plant Mall, Shoemart (SM) Fairview, Festival Supermall, Powerplant Mall, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Metro East, SM Manila and SM Marikina.

Man haunt

From page D4

Carbon

A one-stop for fresh accessories, the new look from the Bata fashion is the stand for you. With branches at Greenbelt 3, another Power Plant Mall, the homegrown brand carries a limited range of footwear made leather shoes as well as bags with leathered interiors.

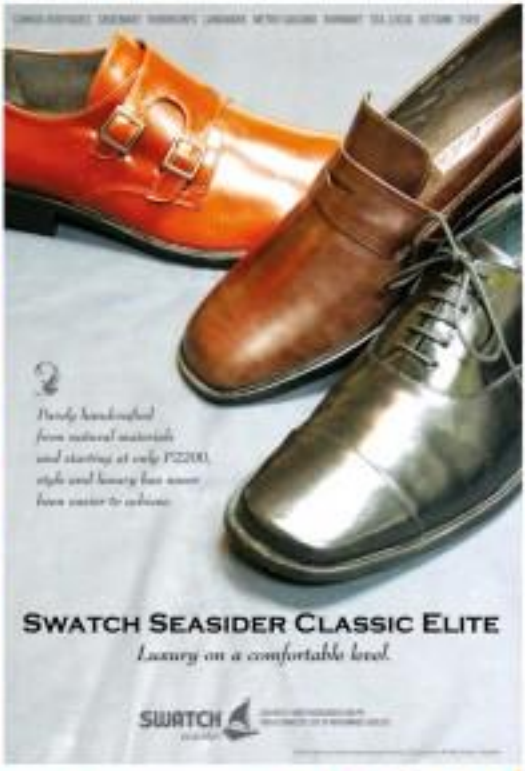
Fashion's tragic, from emotional type to carry-one, the bag and wallets, are smart, streamlined and beautifully functional. The many design sensibilities and the premium quality leather make it better value.

Manger

Who says a three-bedroomed unit must come with traditional? Mr Manger, ready to wear suits come with the most unusual colours — from metallic blue to shiny black — and fit to perfection.

Of course, Manger also offers more conventional stuff for conservative guys. In fact, the brand aims to educate trendy young men with a wide range of suits and jackets for various occasions.

Manger, with branches at Glorietta 2 and Old Megamall, open soon from Manila and Hong Kong to design its merchandise. Production is done in China.



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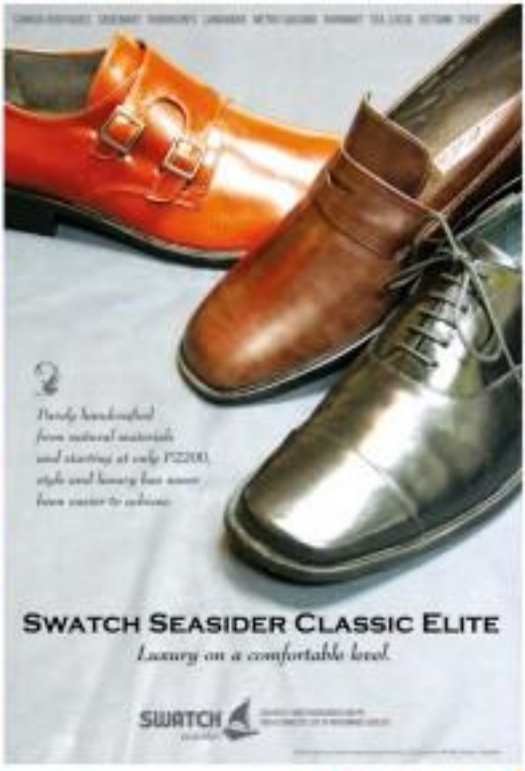

House of Fusion

Shoppers by-passing sparkling-new foreign brands at Manu Boutique, Christian Dior and Fred Perry, House of Fusion is perhaps the most unlikely place to go to for spunky apparel.

But it happens to be the only store in the country which sells YLG wool coats, rubberoid shoes, cylindrical bags to athletic apparel. The line, of course, is a collaboration between Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto and Adidas.

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Man haunt

Make Dad happy with men's shops that offer stylish choices

By Alex Y. Vergara

FATHER'S DAY IS A mere two days away. In case you haven't found the perfect gift for the man in your life, Inquirer Fashion scoured Metro Manila in search of wearables as well as accessories shoes and articles of clothing for "Daddy."

A number of stores featured in this story are no longer new. But by keeping a low profile, they've managed to stay fresh and exciting all these years. And by virtue of the unique range of stuff they carry, they've become the city's best kept secrets.

Of course, as far as fashion-forward men are concerned, secrets don't exist. But if your dad or hubby is a regular guy shopper, you're bet you're not what's available in these stores. Why don't you do him a favor by checking them out?

Philosophy

LIFESTYLE
Editor Cheche Banzon-Farnacio
Contributing editor Ria Francisco-Prieto

BEAUTY

Everyday pretty!

FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN

BY JES ABAÑA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY

BY PH. JUNIOR

NUTTS

BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

LOVEBONDS

BY ELIZABETH CHEREDILO

ATOMO AND WEBSY

BY LINA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PANLILIO

BIKO MACHINE

BY MANNY ARIÑA

PERICOSMOS

BY JOHNNY TUDIO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUN MILAMBILING

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Bohemian capital
6 Lively dance to
10 Cartoon Critter's creator
14 Dangerously stylish
15 Inter Continent
16 Small explosion
17 Against a SWAT team
18 Ice
19 In what manner
20 Port of call
21 Tear up
22 Nintendo Mobile 3D
24 Gravedigger Hamlet
25 Turkish title
26 Long, long time
28 Lunch hollow
29 Unbeliever
33 Goes
35 Bills it is, like for this puzzle
36 Friends with
37 Person
38 What color
39 Cautious
40 Theory pioneer
41 Latte
42 Like SEAL
43 Clings
44 Iconic statue in Cat Ballou scene
45 Roman one
46 Mr. Dangerous
50 Number 7, in the MED
51 Einstein's birthplace
54 ___ Lam (book)
55 Always up
56 Cold fluids
57 Another issue of Hello
58 Former Pres. attorney
62 Kin of snarky TV brand guy
64 Bristol guy
65 Benny's theme

DOWN
1 Sandwich sandwiches
2 Public Politico
3 Prince and the Revolution hit
4 Bush's grandpa
5 Ice smoother
6 Help out
7 Cabaret model
8 Stare stupidly
9 "A Nightmare on Elm Street" villain's victim
10 Black or white
11 Land of "Hamlet"
12 Not common
13 Verbal reservation
23 Rock Bo ___
27 Mild
28 "Heavenly ___"
29 Hobbits' home, to Tolkien
30 Rolling Stones hit
31 Statement began
32 "Mr. Mom" co-star
34 Nobody's maxim, to Tolkien
36 Cyclopic opponent?
37 Scoop holder
39 Weight (grease)
40 Boxer Holyfield
41 Go-composer
43 Pokemonster
44 Irish Sea isle
47 Lights of a restaurant sort
48 Angel quiverful?
49 Speak to "Van Gal"
50 Auto financing co.
51 Shield
52 Wrinkle
53 Trombone branch
59 Title Spin
60 Part of Eph.
61 "The Mama" kids

By Alan E. Parker
Weston, Wis

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

TIDE BOOK TODAY: You battle a deep vein of things. You work for better or worse. You're cutting down on the number of times you say "I'm sorry." You take time to use the browser you understand the value of cultivating an ethical, people-pert disposition. It's the way you treat human (and future). The more you practice, the more you'll be able to do it. Remember: Be kind. Be considerate. Be ethical. Be a human being. Be yourself.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Good vision and a sharp mind will help you make better, smarter power struggles with practically everyone. Especially with those you love. (Or for that.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're not sure about one of your assumptions or something has to do with how you earn your money. You need your wits! (If you're not sure, it's time to learn.) Be smart enough to know you don't always get your own way.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're not the only one with partners and other friends and family who have to make a shift. You have to make a shift. You have to make improvements. Be willing to make improvements.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It might be tough dealing with someone who's not as motivated today. Your efforts to work with the person need a large helping of tact and forthcoming assistance. (Clue.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're not quite sure what to do. Don't be. You could help Sandra, and so others can understand what you mean.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You've been given some good ideas that you can work with. Be sure to ask for help. Be willing to work with others. Be willing to work with others. Be willing to work with others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): People are more than ready to help you. But people are not you. Some people know, some people don't, and some people don't know.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Don't let others discourage you from your efforts to express yourself in some way today. You want to make a point. Make sure it's a point you can live with.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You have a lot to say today. Make sure you're ready to make improvements. Be willing to make improvements. Be willing to make improvements.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You have a lot to say today. Make sure you're ready to make improvements. Be willing to make improvements. Be willing to make improvements.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have a lot to say today. Make sure you're ready to make improvements. Be willing to make improvements. Be willing to make improvements.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're in a position to help others. Don't let others down. Don't let others down. Don't let others down.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — By Dave Green

		5			7	3		
6	4				2		1	8
7								9
8	9							
				4				
							2	3
4								2
2	7		3				4	1
		3	2			6		

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Type and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	6	5	7	3	2	4	8	1
3	1	4	9	8	5	2	7	6
7	8	2	1	6	4	3	9	5
5	4	8	2	7	1	6	3	9
6	7	1	3	5	9	8	2	4
2	3	9	6	4	8	1	5	7
4	2	7	5	1	6	9	3	8
1	9	3	8	2	7	5	4	6
8	5	6	4	9	3	7	1	2

Makeup madness

YES, EVERYBODY HAS experienced a makeup boo-boo. So before writing this article, I called some of my friends and asked them what theirs were. I actually enjoyed reading their stories and just had to add mine, just for laughs.

A long time ago when highwaist was still open, I put this eyeliner from Avon Silkess. I they came with pleat, and I was so proud of myself. I was talking to this cute guy and he kept touching his eyes. Finally, midway through our conversation, he couldn't help it and he told me my eyeliner were falling off. No wonder he kept touching his eyes!

—Mandy de la Rama-Santos, reporter

In high school, the lip liner became the "in" thing to use. In college my friends and I would line our lips and put lip gloss on top. I thought it was the coolest thing ever. Looking back, we all looked like fish.—Kelly Misa, model

My first encounter with makeup was in grade school. My sister had a somersaulter called Eraser, which was in bullet lipstick form. I must have put a bit too much, because when my sister saw me, she couldn't help laughing at my deadly pale lips! I never touched her concealer again.—Marie Calica, Marie Claire beauty editor

When I was 13 years old, I put some eyeliner and walked in my boyfriend's house. I went straight to the living room where all my friends were hanging out. To my surprise, a girl I was not particularly fond of was there. I went to graycel, but I felt confident and felt pretty because of my lined eyes. After a few minutes, I had to use the restroom. To my surprise the eyeliner had run. Happy Halloween to me! I got so pissed at my boyfriend for not even telling me.—Chenea Garcia, actress/TV host

Ria Francisco-Prieto

When I was younger, I used to play with my mom's makeup behind her back. Once, I tried to put on her ready red lipstick and red blush right before going to a party. I thought I could easily remove it with just a swipe, but I was wrong! I kept wiping off the makeup with tissue but it wouldn't come off. To make thing worse, I ran into a wedding from my mom for messing up her makeup. I also looked like a party clown with streaks of red stains all over my face!—Mia Pamela-Cruz, Inventures editor in chief

As for me, I was so excited to attend the Seniors-Freshmen dance. It was the first time I was allowed to go out at night with my friends. We all met up at a friend's house to get ready. I remember my mom always nagging me, saying don't wear that kind and kaukikinahoes. To this day, I still don't know what that means, but I'm sure it has something to do with it. Anyway, I was so excited that I put on everything. Once after, we got the pictures from the dance and, to my surprise, my face was so much whiter than my neck! I had a frightening "Booking face"! I ran all my pictures and scanned to my.

Makeup is something that helps enhance our beauty if used correctly. Truth is, I used to tell my friends Percy and Marielle, who didn't like to have makeup on even for formal events, that makeup is a friend. I know it sounds lame, but it's true.

Our first hands-on experience would actually help us know what not to do the next time. And, yes, practice makes perfect.

The best makeup is the natural kind. This normally requires blush, lip tint and an eyelash curler, and takes five minutes or even less. If you are not a first-timer and you are spending more time on it, you are probably putting on more than you actually should, so beware.

I asked Jigi Mayuga, Ethical Facial makeup artist, to get four girls to do makeup on. The girls came from different professions. My goal is to show how easy makeup can be and can at work without looking too heavy.

After answering the "natural do," we should all graduate and be more adventurous with our makeup applications. For me, adding eyeliner makes the final step-up, then come colored eyeshadow and lip tint.

I stopped using fake eyelashes since they didn't fit me. For some of my friends, they turned out to be a good thing though.

Makeup is something personal. What fits one person may not suit you, and vice versa. When adding something new to your normal routine, it is good to ask a trained friend if what has been added is obvious, or if you do look better with it.

E-mail the author at rthenacy@inquirer.com.ph

Blush and tint, eyeliner and lipstick are things that help enhance our beauty, if used correctly

Cheri Mercado - news anchor

Makeup used:
- Face: True Match Liquid Foundation Rose Ivory, Blush Dolce Rose Cheeks
- Lips: Color Riche Coral Fame Rouge Creme
- Eyes: Color Appeal Trio Eyeshadow Beige Nude, Couleur Caractere Mirabelle Black, Sugar Star Liquid Eyeliner Black, Brow Stylist Define-a-Brow Pencil Dark Brown

For hair:
- Twist Organic Shimmer Shake Iron Volume Mousse

Skincare:
- White Perfect Eye Lash SPF17 Moisturizer
- Visible Results Moisturizer for glowing skin

Imelda Tinsay - flight attendant

Makeup used:
- Face: True Match Liquid Foundation Rose Beige, Blush Dolce Cheeks
- Lips: Glam Shine Juice Gloss
- Eyes: Color Appeal Trio Eyeshadow Blue Nude, Mascara Curl Mascara Black

For hair:
- Double Line Eyeliner/Brow and Iconic Spray

Skincare:
- Hydralevel Eye
- Visible Results Moisturizer for glowing skin

Trisha Bermudez - interior designer

Makeup used:
- Face: Shine Compliment Natural Beige, Blush Dolce Fresh Papaya
- Lips: Glam Shine Cream Gloss Red
- Eyes: Color Appeal Mono Eyeshadow Brown, Double Intention Mascara Black, Contour Revealed Eyeliner Black, Brow Stylist Eye Brow Pencil Dark Brown

For hair:
- Iconic Black Spirit
- Studio Line Gel Straight

Skincare:
- White Perfect Eye
- UV Perfect SPF50 with High UV protection to whiten the eyes in front

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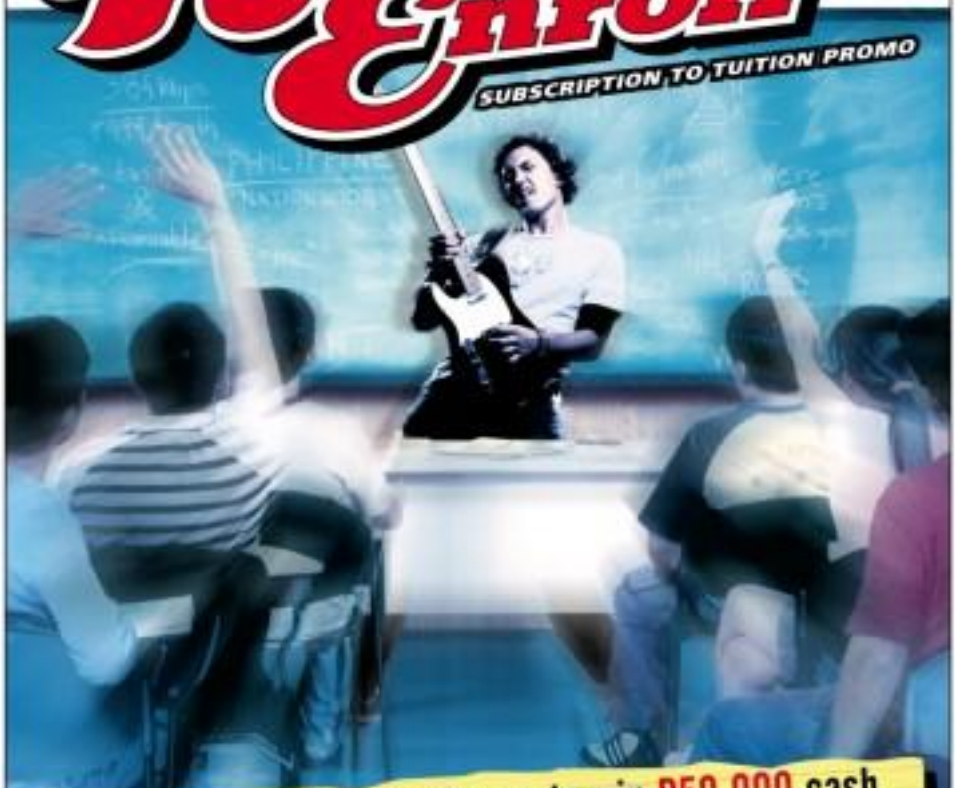

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LIFESTYLE

Filipinas lag behind Asian women in skincare

LIFE-STYLED

Zhuñiga
Skincare Saint_Kinsley

OVER LUNCH THE other day, we got a bit of information that may not necessarily be new but is an interesting nonetheless.

Did you know that many Filipino women still use bar soap, if not detergent, on their face, and then compared to other Asian women, we are the least meticulous about skin care? This, despite the onslaughts of skin care products, the marketing blitzes of various brands, and the glass smiles to skin care technology in recent years.

Apparently, a significant percentage of women, especially in the provinces, have yet to outgrow the habit, if not the age-old "tradition," of using one soap for face, body and hair. Their skincare regimen begins with soap and ends with a sprinkle of baby powder.

In contrast, other Asian women—particularly the Japanese, the Thai and the Indonesians—have as many as seven steps in their beauty regimen, from cleansing to toning, moisturizing and so on.

"The Japanese, for instance, have a long heritage of skincare regimen, not only for the face but also for the entire body," said Marilyn Chiaosiong, the new brand manager of Watsons.

Surveys also showed that out of three Filipina women who see facial care users are sorority girls. It seems their skincare regimen goes only as far as toning astringent, which they dab on like a cleansing liquid, usually as often as thrice a day. And this is another oddity unique to the Pinay—she loves the stinging sensation of a strong astringent, which is hailed for the skin, of course. It's like punishing oneself to be pretty.

"Astringent is emotionally satisfying to us that you can't go out.

"It also leaves long-term damage and makes you photosensitive," says Maeya.

Our relatively backward ways where skincare regimen is concerned can be the result, of course, not only to lack of skincare education, but also to low purchasing power. Most women in this country still don't have the means to afford skincare products. Or, as Pond's assistant brand manager Orange Abesia noted, "It could be a choice between that and food, or that and cell phone load."

All that makes the Philippines a good challenge for skincare brands like Pond's. So said owner is already a household brand to generations of Filipinas. Now it is working to endear the Filipina's habit to the correct steps in skincare—from cleansing and toning to moisturizing and using leave-on cream.

LIFE-STYLED

Zhuñiga
Skincare Saint_Kinsley

It should be interesting to see how its whitening toner, which has the vitamin B3 needed to whitens the skin from within (not peeling it off incessantly), would make inroads in the market.

Mixing Tinic

The National Artists Awards presentation at the Cultural Center of the Philippines last Friday night was quite stirring. It didn't drag even if video and live shows were done to feature the achievements of the National Artists: **Bienvenido Lumbera, Abdulmari Imao, Ramon Obusan, Imao, Fernando Poe Jr.** and **Bienvenido Lumbera.**

What we found touching was the Video portion, where recorded monthly farewell to the cast of "La Vie en Rose," translated in Filipino by Rolando Tinio. That moment, we missed Rolando the National Artist and Rolando the friend.

The performance of a "Rama Hari" excerpt with music by Ryan Cayabyab and lyrics by Dr. Lutgardo reminded us of this tonsorial ballet music of that may not be known to the future generations. We told UCP president Dra Antolin Oposida's be a hard idea to market in CD of the fascinating "Rama Hari" music. Interestingly, Ben managed Ballet Philippines when this eminent dance company staged "Rama Hari."

That night, we also learned that NCCA head Ambeth Ocampo was merely summoned to the Senate to answer questions about the National Artists Awards; it not-so-subtle motive so getting, no doubt, there still.

Pinoy not hurt

Meanwhile, the other fashion design nominee for National Artist, **Pitoy Moreno**, will be in Washington in this time to stage a fashion show marking the centennial anniversary of Filipino migration to the US.

"Honestly, I don't feel bad," Pitoy told us about not having been chosen as National Artist for fashion design.

"Aabera was a good designer," he added.

Not only that. There's ample time for Pitoy, who's ageless and timeless. His Washington DC show at Ritz Carlton will have 125 pieces to be modeled by beauty queens such as Miss Universe 2005 Precious Lara Quigaman and 2006 Philippine Model 2000 Karla Barcena, among others.

Yet more than three decades now, Pitoy has been bringing his collections around the world, so-far as Iran. Where Pitoy's outrageous up again in the next selection of National Artists. The patriarch will go beyond design and craft to identity-building abroad.

Meanwhile, Tim Yap was just in Paris to launch his limited-edition watch (Oh my, Tim, you've come a long way). He said, to him that Barbara Goldsmas of the Dolce & Gabbana brand were his watch during the launch. What can you say to that?

We're hooked on astringent, and many still use detergent on their face

Happy Father's Day!

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Better Diaper Days with Baby Company's

Biggest Diaper Sale

Diaper changing can be a grueling task even for a doting mom or an eager dad but it can also be a great time to create a bonding experience with your little one. While leaning over your baby, your face is at perfect arms-length distance for engaging eye contact and communication. It's a special moment to exchange looks and smiles, to touch, and learn about baby and for baby to learn from you.

From birth until potty training you will change your baby's diaper around 2,000 times. Thank heavens for disposable diapers! Changing disposable diapers can also be a little tricky. Veteran parents who have since mastered the art can attest to this, but for newbie moms and dads out there, let Baby Company lend you a hand through your baby's diaper days with this year's biggest Diaper Sale!

Now thru June 30, you can get bundles and bundles of great deals on participating diaper brands for your little bundle of joy! Plus, you can get a free foldable laundry basket with a minimum ₱750 pesos single receipt purchase on participating diaper brands. Take advantage of this year's biggest Diaper Sale, and stock up on the best offers from leading diaper brands like Huggies, Mamy Poko, Drypers and EQ Diapers. Rush to the nearest Baby Company outlet today and grab all the diapers you can at the biggest Diaper Sale!

Shop at Baby Company outlets at all SM Department Stores nationwide and get all your baby's needs from diapers to feeding bottles, from clothes to toys, and anything and everything for your baby, all in one store. Baby Company houses a complete selection of baby essentials and leading brands for infants and toddlers with regular offerings of special savings and discounts.

Visit Baby Company at all SM Department Stores with new branches at the Mall of Asia and Clark Field Pampanga, and get great value shopping!

ads

Edel T./Fashion Czar Pitoy Moreno is shown to showcase his collection in Washington D.C. on June 17.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo leads the ribbon-snipping ceremony at the blessing of SM Mall of Asia. With her are SM founder and chair Henry Sy Sr. and wife Felicidad Sy, Rep. Consuelo Dy (leftmost) and Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales (rightmost), and Hans Sy, at the back of his mother.

HENRY Sy Sr. with Alfonso Sy, Soreen Lee, Sen. Alfredo Lim and Francis Chua

WARNER Bros.' Francis Sodres, United International Pictures general manager Selina de Asuncion, Solar Entertainment's William Tiong, Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr. and SPI's VP for leisure Ric Carvalajan

Malls, jewelry, whitening and other wows

THERE WAS ADRENALINE RUSH when the absolutely awesome SM Mall of Asia doors were open for them to rave of thousands of shoppers, joiningers.

As soon as SM Prime Holdings' boulevard president Hans T. Sy and SM Inc. president Teresita Sy-Coson welcomed the first wave of customers, the crowd simply flowed into the shops. The others dined, watched the movies, or simply had fun checking the mall's top most attraction such as the fantastic panoramic view of Manila Bay, the country's first Ferris wheel (there are 20 cabs that accord) and an Olympic-size ice-skating rink.

There are over 600 food and entertainment shops and over 130 indoor and al fresco dining outlets.

Rev. Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, celebrated the Mass, followed by the ribbon-snipping ceremony with President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor.

The distinguished fly-clan was there, led by visionary Henry Sy, SM founder and chair Henry Sy Sr., and his adorable wife Felicidad Sy.

Other members of the Sy clan present were SM Investments president Harley Sy and SM Prime Holdings SVP for marketing Elizabeth Sy.

"Paradoxical as for the premiere destination mall in the Asia-Pacific region, the more than 400,000 sq m mall is located on a 19 ha property in the Bay Boulevard in Pasay City. It is SM Prime Holdings' 20th supermall, and the company's most ambitious project to date," reported Millie Shaw of ISA.

The complex consists of four buildings linked by elevated walkways. The main mall includes shopping and dining establishments; the food court, and cleaning mall.

The South Parking Building houses 800 Department Store and half of the 5,000 parking spaces; while the North Parking Building has the SM Hypermarket and more dining areas.

The world's only oceanview mall has been converted to landscaped pedestrian lanes. It has outdoor retail and dining venues.

Without batting an eyelash, I must say that the SM Mall of Asia was definitely designed with us, the customers, in mind.

Check out this dynamic mega-structure, it's a one-of-a-kind in Asia, pahinggan.

Milsday turns 40

Be in dazzling 40th anniversary this year, Milsday launched "A Gift of Love," a precious little gift card, at The Wellness in Ortigas Center, pahinggan.

"We came it to our team's dream for every 40 years to turn a place of Milsday no matter how small, we thought of introducing our newest product, 'A Gift of Love from Milsday'" explained Milsday Daysit Soliven, president of Milsday. "This gift card would serve to put a smile on the faces of your loved ones."

Also who want to give their sweetheart the best gifts should try "A Gift of Love." It's a precious little gift, pahinggan.

In true Daysit tradition the late Milsday and Vincent Daysit used to hold grand parties here and abroad), the launch was an awesome good time, pahinggan. Hosting the event were the

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission president Robert Aventajado and PSC's Steve Hontiveros at the opening of the Olympic-size ice-skating rink

PEARY City Mayor Ferdinand Trinidad

PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer's chair of the board, Marilyn Pedroso Prieto

AUSTRALIAN Ambassador Tony Hely and wife Wendy Jeffrey

BALIKBI Airlines' passenger sales manager Manuel Rigor awards Gina Santos the grand prize of a trip to Bali via Brunei Airlines

HOT young achievers Businessman Benny Salinas and Peter Rawlak

HAPPY young couple, Tina and Nikki Jurado with their baby boy

EDWARD Lim

SHERRY Sy and Shiela Lim

THE LATE Milsday and Vincent Daysit's two gifts of love. The second-generation Daysit jewelers: Jaqui D. Bonzon, Christina Daysit, only brother Mark Daysit, Yvonne D. Bernardino and Michelle D. Soliven

JEWELRY is their thing. Lori Gutierrez, Ollie Salinas, Hilo Quemelin, Gilda Salonga and TV's popular host, Paolo Bediones

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcadio

Photos by Alex Van Hagen
Kodak EasyShare

MARY KAY HOTSHOTS. MKP sales development and training director Lynne Tolosa, MK general manager Bernie Mercado, Mary Kay Asia-Pacific Region marketing manager Susan Freeman and MKP marketing director Nenia Rodrigo

COSMOPOLITAN'S Iane Evangelista, Nancy Haviland and Marie Chua

PEGIRLS Dusker Cienciara, Rheng Lorenzo, Aiza Gomo and Queen Dy Guan

MGR checks out precious charm bracelets with MKP sales development and training director Lynne Tolosa.

L&LL Kwans, CEB chair Clarissa Dayrit, Lei Concepcion, lawyer Albert Arvilla and Rom Tevanio

Mary Kay's all-white affair

As I breezed in the grand ballroom of Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila in Ortigas Center, I saw that everything was totally white, pahinggan. After all, it was the fantastic launch of Mary Kay's new Brightening line, TimeWise Systems.

Shortly after being warmly welcomed by Nancy Bared of Sassy Bared and Associates Inc., we were pampered and beautified.

Yes our Mary Kay Phils. Inc. general manager, Bernie Mercado, marketing director Beena Rodrigo, sales development and training director Lynne Tolosa.

The long list of VIPs included stylish Susan Freeman, a special guest from Mary Kay's Dallas headquarters, who is also marketing manager for the Asia-Pacific region.

The new launched is the new Lucentis technology behind the TimeWise System. Mary Kay's TimeWise System effectively targets the source of skin discoloration and restores the skin's balance.

Great gifts were raffled off, including personalized charm bracelets. In addition, some early birds received fab gifts like limited-edition Mary Kay soft-phone charms with sparkling beaded crystal and special Mary Kay jewelry sets.

At the end of the all-white afternoon, the dazzling winners were given exclusive samples of the TimeWise System, while the men returned Mary Kay TimeWise 3-in-1 cleansing bars.

The grand prize in the raffle was a familiarization tour of the new Mary Kay facility in China, pahinggan.

I buy experience pure beauty finds pure perfection with TimeWise.

Call Mary Kay Phils. at 8098111 or visit www.marykay.com.ph

Dressing up Dad

Fatherhood statements

THINK OF THE SEASON'S FINEST FABRICS, silhouettes and colors which are tailor-made for fathers who insist upon quality both in life and in fashion and you'll think of Jack Nicklaus apparel which are exclusively distributed by Boston Marketing Corporation.

For dyeing father Frankie Tinga, youthful mayor of Tagaig City, the Jack Nicklaus collection is solid proof fatherhood can be done in style.

A life of public service is wont to take its toll on family time, but for Tinga, it gives the unique opportunity to teach lifelong lessons by example.

"I try to get them involved in some of my civic activities," he shares. "They join me in my community events like weddings, graduation ceremonies, coronations and fiestas."

Through these activities, Mayor Tinga hopes his three children—Kyle, 11, Grey, 8, and Andy, 3—will gain confidence in themselves and eventually learn to like a life of service for others.

Available at Rustan's Makati, Rustan's Tower, Rustan's Alabang, Rustan's Gateway, Rustan's Ermita and Rustan's Cebu, SM Makati, Mall of Asia and SM Clark.

COMPLETION. Jelly-in-jelly with moulded canvas strap—yes, the canvas is painted—camouflaged in a dark mossy green

POSITE. with deep navy-blue plastic strap and straight-edged loop, matte buckle and finely contoured matte case

For cool Pops

BINARIES. sink an earthy brown suede strap, white highlights and a pale sky dial

Jelly in Jelly Swatch watches are the hot choices. Swiss made, of high quality and affordable at P2,950, the Jelly in Jelly Swatch has a larger face and a longer strap. Available as all Swatch stores and kiosks.

NIGHTSILK. all-black beauty from the moulded leather strap to the plastic buckle

Memo to Dad

SUITABLE FOR MEN WHO ARE always on the go, like Joaqui Tello and sons Luigi and Paolo, Mento's wear-it-with-it clothes can be dressed up or dressed down, depending on a guy's work day and schedule.

For Manila tennis assistant coach Luigi and younger brother Paolo, a sports commentator, the love of the game began with their dad who was a sports nut, too. It's all in the family and all in the PBA.

"I look at my kids and I don't have any regrets at all. They're so cheerful, nice, friendly. They treat me like an older brother, and that's the way I want it," says Joaqui.

Mento is available in all leading malls nationwide.

ON LUIGI. Mento long-sleeved basic stripped shirt with striped shirt under a Mento striped cotton blazer, Mento brown dress pants, Mento leather belt. **On Joaqui.** Mento dark-blue short-sleeved shirt with rib detail, Mento khaki dress pants. **On Paolo.** Mento brown short-sleeved striped shirt with rib detail, Mento black dress pants

The gift that gives

THE NICE THING ABOUT SHOPPING FOR Dad at Debenhams is that you get a P200 gift voucher for every P2,500 worth of menswear purchase until June 18. Debenhams offers tailored pieces from J by Jasper Conran and the more casual pieces from Paul Fleming and Mango. Add a little zing to dad's wardrobe with accessories like belts, cufflinks and neckties. Debenhams is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc. and is located at the 3/L, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Call 6339002.

Spring for this carry-all

ANY HOMES ADVERTISE SPECIAL PROMOS. Until June 30, for every purchase of two Springfield polo papers on a single receipt, you can buy an SPF bag for only P300. The SPF bag (stuffy wallet, keys, cards, iPod, cameras and more into either the spacious main compartment or an ultra-convenient zippered pocket. Springfield is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc., and is located at Greenbelt 3, Power Plant Mall, SM Megamall, Robinsons Place Manila, Alabang Town Center, Rustan's Makati and Ayala Center Cebu.

Row, row, row the boat

FOR THESE MEMBERS OF THE Metrobank Card Dragon Philippine Rowing Team, there's nothing more fun than showing the thrill of the sport with their children. And for Father's Day, they open up about the happiness of fatherhood.

"Family life is also like dragon boat rowing," businessman and fitness practitioner Irvin Pomarier explains. "In this kind of sport, there is no star player—the whole team moves as one machine. Just like with the life, you can't point to any single member as the reason why a family is strong because there is concentrated effort from everyone to make the family work."

Pomarier is blessed with three children: Dave, 18, Gabrielle, 8, and Kimberly, 6. Soccer, rock-climbing and movie-watching been his kind of quality time with the kids.

Businessman Noel dela Merced and his 3-year-old son Nico are a tandem. "Nico is my mini-me," shares Noel. "We're each other's buddies. That's what we call each other—'Buddy!' Even when we watched 'The Lion King,' Nico would say, 'Daddy, you're Mufasa and I'm Simba!'"

"My son was a surprise in my life," pronounces mountaineer Mark Bautista. He has a dream for himself and his son: "When I move to Hong Kong in 1995, it was a father-and-son moment, sending together in dragon-boat racing. I thought then, 'Why not?' I'm looking forward to that moment. The question is, will I still be fit when I'm 50?"

Celebrate moments with Dad on his special day with card's dinner by using Metrobank Visa. With its worldwide acceptance benefit, it is the perfect companion that makes family moments even more tangible.

ROWER dad Noel dela Merced with his "buddy" Nico

METROBANK Card Dragon Philippine Rowing Team's Mark Bautista with son Matteo

ROWER dad Irvin Pomarier with his very own little league...his kids Dave, Gabrielle and Kimberly

How to bag him

IT USED TO BE THAT MEN DIDN'T NEED bags to carry all their little everyday things. But times have changed and so have men's purses. Jack Spade, who is awarded to log on to Kate Spade, has come out with messenger bags, briefcases, utility bags, wallets, travel bags and related accessories like billfold and travel wallets, all luxury cases made of textile leather and vinyl cases.

Check out the red- and cask-colored book packs, and the aptly-named Dad field bag that come in chocolate and tank with orange padded changing mats.

Jack Spade is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc., and is located at Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center.

Inspecting gadgets for Dad

GADGET GEEKS MUST CHECK OUT THE LINE OF Apple portables (iBook, Power Book or MacBook Pro) or the iPod line (available in varying models and capacities) available at Microsoundstore Inc., the leading distributor of networking, mobile and digital lifestyle devices.

For tech-savvy fathers, there are also many hand-held options from HP and Nitro. If Dad is adequately stocked digitally, consider giving any of Mobile TV marvels, mobile adapters, silicon to navigator cases.

Microsoundstore has branches in Pasig City, Mercato Cebu and Davao. Call 6309474.

Macho must-haves

IF YOU WANT TO BRIDGE through your shopping for a Father's Day gift, but off to Gateway Mall.

At Rustan's Gateway Mall, choose from a quarter of skin care products like the Clarins for Men and a trio of shaving creams and after-shave moisturizer from Mario Badescu. From Shiseido comes another set of moisturizing products in volume dad's debonair proclivities.

Over at Marks & Spencer, trendy and roomy shirts in cool colors are sure to suit every dad's preference.

LION dancers from the Philippine Lion Dance Association of Binondo, Manila, perform during the Chinese New Year celebration at Salcedo Community Market last January. The fun dances will be part of the anniversary celebration of the Salcedo Community Market.
INQUIRER.net

Makati markets mark second year

SATURDAY, JUNE 17, THE SALCEDO community Market at Jaime Velasquez Park, Tordesillas and Leviste (formerly Alfaro) Streets in Salcedo Village, will celebrate two years of community service and successful entrepreneurship. The market — which has been drawing shoppers from as far away as Antipolo, Novaliches and Alabang — will open 7 a.m.–9 p.m. with a marching band and traditional lion dance from Chinatown to herald another year of good fortune. The Cebu Lapaz Portables — a mainstay of many events at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, will perform from 10–1 p.m., and the Makati High School Angklung and Choir will close the event at 4 p.m. Special discounts on all items await shoppers. Also included in the one-day event is an art fair organized by the Museum Jaucian Boston Gallery. Drawing Room, Lopez-gonen de Gallery, Galeria de las Islas and the Silverio one Gallery.

GOINGS ON

The art fair, called "Art in the Park," will feature other participating artists from the Rustic Mile up Kalaklan, Kamias and Diliman, majority of the membership of Santa Teresa College of Manila, is also mark the general assembly meeting of all Museum Foundation members. The market is being managed and supervised by Barangay Captain Liberato Lim with the cooperation and support of the Makati Commercial Estates Association, Inc.

FAMILY DRAMA. The Gateway Mall in Araneta Center, Cubao is hosting a promotional booth for the children "Hagenberg Bataan Medicus Rizal," until June 18. The event is part of Filipino celebrations of "Araw ng Lalawigan ng Rizal."

BOOKS FAIR. MyGrowth's, Coach Philippines and Points Out Bowling Gym present "The Jubilee" June 16–18, at Market! Market! and at Kalaang Town Center on June 23–25.

SANTACRUZAN. The Catholic Women's Guild will present fantasy on on June 21, 3 p.m., at NSO Test in Iloilo. The Mother and Child festival will take place and be launched on the same day. Call 5429000.

CONTEST. The Book Development Association of the Philippines announced the opening of Gintong Aklat Awards 2006. Contest is open to all publishers of books in English or Filipino, in any of the following categories: literature, social sciences, religion, the arts, natural sciences, trade books, children's books and Tagalog novels. Deadline of entries is on June 30. Entries must be submitted to the National Book Development Board Office, M. Roxas St., Area 42, University of the Philippines Diliman. Winners will be announced at the Manila International Book Fair on Aug. 26, at the World Trade Center. Call 9255001 or 9276200 local 105.

SEMINAR. The Missionaries of Mary will conduct a one-day seminar on the theme "Mary our Mother," June 25, at the Mother Missionaries, 21 90-St., New Manila, QC. Call 7414160.

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HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

ACROSS
1. Chinese traffic force
4. Co-founder of Rome
8. Alliance for short
9. ____ Jefferson, 13th U.S. founding father
10. Computer
11. Start with golden Touch
12. Thai tu
14. Metal Breaker Earlier
15. Lana Cabrera
17. Pinch
18. Cable Network/Film
20. Medical Org.
22. Signature Lobby
23. French Father
24. Conjunction
25. Missouri Info
26. MTV Host
29. Average ____ 13th Founding Father

DOWN
1. National Superstar Coach Santos
2. UFO Passenger
3. Road Divisions
4. Rivals in Scandal
5. Middle East Chief
6. Actress ____ Fourth President of the USA
7. Bird's Country
12. Field Agent
16. Area in Amsterdam
17. Military Air Force
21. Musical Note
23. Remainder of Bus Lobby
24. Pursuit
25. Spanish Eye
27. Athletic
28. Substitute for Alter

Complete the puzzle. Present to claim your FREE Stuffed Toy on FATHER'S DAY, Sunday, June 18, 2006

Grooming Dad

MAKEOVER 911
Kimmy Salas

Dads who want to have their summer tans fade faster can avail themselves of very affordable exfoliants that do the job

DADS WHO WANT TO have their summer tans fade faster can avail themselves of very affordable exfoliants that do the job. More that your skin won't get lighter than your baby complexion, as these products only exfoliate.

I use Silka Papaya Body Wash (P57.75) and Whitening Lotion (P45.75) in the green variant. There is an orange variant. I prefer the body wash to the soap because it softens the skin more and the scent stays on much longer. Dads, of course, may prefer the soap.

Then there's Beech Organics Papaya Whitening and Firming Body Scrub (P179), Soap (P99) and Lotion (P85)...all very affordable. I am impressed by the quality of these products, as a little goes a long way and they do work.

Godiva's Whitening Bath Soap and Whitening Lipotion Body Lotion cost more than the brand's papaya counterparts, but show lighter skin results in as early as seven days. I have been using the brand's body lotion for years, and it has become the most requested pasalubong by relatives abroad.

Some readers loved the face whitening products from Mary Kay, Obagi Nuderm and Shiseido. I recommended last time, but some readers were asking for items they could get via the grocery or drugstore, especially for dads in a rush.

Well, Silka Skin Multi-White has the facial foam that, aside from scrubbing off dirt and oil, also lightens skin color and dissolves dullness, dries aging, smoothens skin and mattifies without over-drying. I tried it, and my skin was shine-free and velvety after, but the clean smell is too manly, so it's really meant for guys.

The 5-in-1 moisturizer with SPF20 is so matte that my pores seemed to disappear, and I did not become oily till many hours later. I didn't even need face powder, and my pimples healed so much faster.

Thanks to the environmental revolution, men are more concerned about their appearance as well. Dark undereye circles now bother them, as these age the face a good few years at least. My favorite products for them are Dove Eye Cream and Shiseido Anti-age Eye and Lip Contour, but since these products are expensive, many men are hesitant to buy.